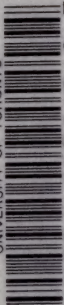
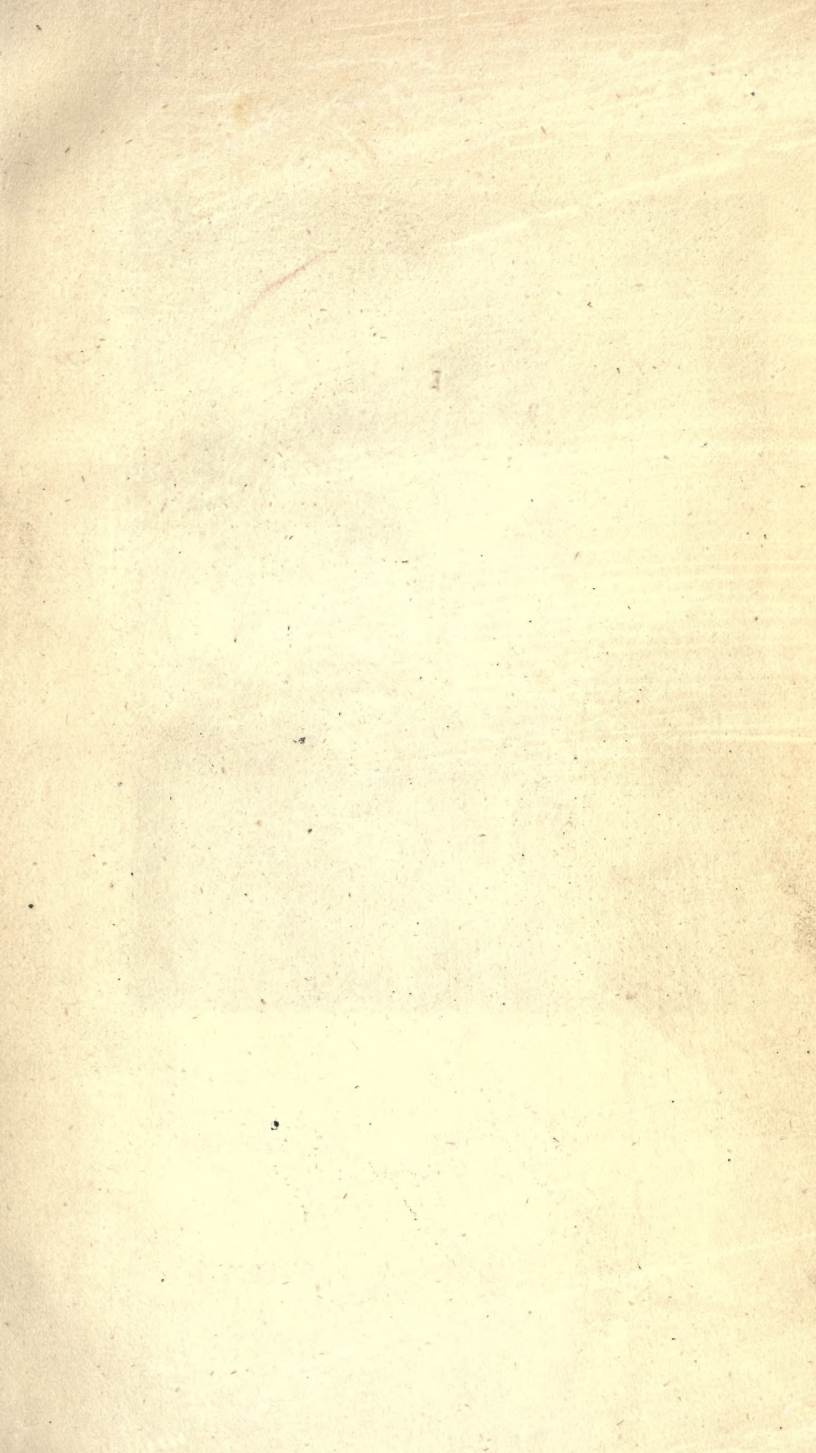


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George R.

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MEMOIRS

of



GEORGE THE FOURTH,

by

ROBERT HUISH.

VOL. I.



NEW PALACE,
THE BIRTHPLACE OF GEORGE 4th

LONDON:

Published by Thomas Kelly, Paternoster Row.

1831.



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MEMOIRS
OF
GEORGE THE FOURTH

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE

MOST INTERESTING SCENES

OF HIS

Private and Public Life,

AND THE

IMPORTANT EVENTS OF HIS MEMORABLE REIGN;

WITH CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES OF ALL THE

CELEBRATED MEN

WHO

WERE HIS FRIENDS AND COMPANIONS AS A PRINCE,

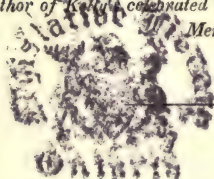
AND

HIS MINISTERS AND COUNSELLORS AS A MONARCH.

COMPILED FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES, AND DOCUMENTS IN THE
KING'S LIBRARY IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, &c.

By ROBERT HUIISH,

*Author of Kelly's celebrated Memoirs of the Princess Charlotte, Life of George III.,
Memoirs of Queen Caroline, &c.*



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INTRODUCTION.

THE demise of a British Monarch is an event of no ordinary interest; it breaks asunder one of the dearest ties of a civilized people, and is sometimes the forerunner of their decline in the scale of nations. It is a period accompanied with intense anxiety, for the time is then come when the veil is to be drawn aside which delicacy or state policy may have prudently thrown over certain transactions; the deeds which, during the lifetime of the Monarch, were concealed, from motives of personal interest or esteem, then stand forth exhibited in their genuine colours; and the historian becomes thereby enabled to bequeath to posterity a clear and faithful narrative of those momentous circumstances which possessed such a preponderating influence on the general relations of the country.

The Royal Family of England, which, by the Act of Succession, includes all the members of the illustrious House of Brunswick, have long been regarded by the country as a species of public property, in which the humblest subject of the land claims a deep and lively interest. It is, therefore, a rational deduction, that whatever stands immediately connected with the honour and happiness of those exalted individuals, necessarily becomes a source of national concern; we feel ourselves identified with all that relates to them, and we revert to the scenes of their lives as if we were individually interested in them, and as being the source from which are to emanate the renown and glory of the kingdom.

The reign of George IV. has been to this nation one of momentous import. In it our foreign and domestic relations have assumed a wholly new and enlarged character; the arts and sciences have been fostered and encouraged by a zeal unexampled in any former period of our history; and we may proudly point to it as an era which was distinguished by a constellation of genius in every branch of useful knowledge which can confer honour on the human race. It has been marked by events to which the historian points with exultation, and which, whilst they cemented the glory and prosperity of the country, contributed, at the same time, to exalt its character in every quarter of the globe, and to establish its ascendancy in the scale of civilized governments.

Considered in a general point of view, it may, with propriety, be affirmed, that there is scarcely a monarch, who ever wielded the sceptre of this country, whose private and public life abounds with more extraordinary and interesting incidents than that of George IV. But it must be admitted, at the same time, that there are also some circumstances in it, over which has been suspended a dark panoply of mystery, and from which the public attention was, at the period of their occurrence, artfully diverted by the deep-laid manœuvres of crafty politicians, or the more zealous efforts of private and confidential friends ; but the time is now come when that panoply will be removed, and that of which only a partial glimpse has been hitherto obtained, or which has been wholly concealed, from a sense of delicacy and respect to the feelings of the existing monarch, will now be fearlessly exposed, uninfluenced by party spirit, and unawed by personal considerations of the consequences which may result to some of the yet living characters who figured in the eventful drama, and who, now that the shield of royalty is taken from before them, must rise or fall in the estimation of the British people, according to the greater or less degree of virtue which they displayed. It may be considered premature to allude in particular to any of those circumstances, as they must, necessarily, form a part of the present work ; but we will, as an example, allude to two—the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and the death of the Princess Charlotte. In regard to the latter, some extraordinary things have crept out ‘through the dark cranny of the night,’ which require a deep and solemn investigation: the facts, as they have been disclosed to us, shall be fully and impartially related ; and if we should be the means of clearing away some of the mysteries which attended that melancholy event, we shall have performed the part of the Patriot and the Christian.

In regard to the publication of the following work, it has not been resolved upon from the sudden impulse of the moment, nor is it founded on any crude and undigested plan ; several years have been occupied in collecting information from sources purely authentic and original ; and the deepest researches have been made into the records and documents in the British Museum, on subjects of historical notoriety or of doubtful character, with the view of stamping that validity and importance on the work which can alone render it valuable to the historian, or useful to posterity.

MEMOIRS

OF

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

SECTION I.

[From 1762 to 1780.]

AMONGST the royal houses of Europe, there is not one which can boast of a more illustrious line of ancestors than that which, fortunately for the liberty and independence of their subjects, is placed on the throne of Britain. The German genealogists suppose it to have descended through females from the Saxon family, so renowned in the early periods of our history, and to which the majority of the royal families of Europe proudly ascribe their pedigrees. On the other hand, antiquarians have traced the descent of the house of Brunswick to those ages that immediately succeeded the subversion of the Roman empire, and reckon, amongst the founders of the family, Caius Cælius, a noble Roman who flourished in the latter part of the fourth century, and who was a relation of the Emperor Augustus. Pharamond, duke of the Franks, and many other renowned chieftains, whose names are consecrated in the annals of the earlier periods of modern European history, may be also considered as the progenitors of the illustrious house of Brunswick, although their immediate history is enveloped in the obscurity of the darker ages. The representative of all these noble houses, Henry the Lion, duke of Brunswick, married Maud, the daughter of Henry II. king of England, who was lineally descended from Egbert, the first king of England; and, consequently, in his veins flowed the blood of Alfred the Great, and of the pure Saxon race of English Sovereigns.

From George I., and his father the elector of Hanover, we ascend in a clear and regular series to the first duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg, who received his investiture from

Frederick II., about the middle of the thirteenth century. If their ample possessions had been the gift of the Emperor to some adventurous soldier, or to some faithful client, we might be content with the antiquity and lustre of a noble race, which had been enrolled nearly six hundred years amongst the princes of Germany; but our ideas are exalted, and our prospect is enlarged by the discovery, that the first duke of Brunswick was rather degraded than adorned by his new titles, since it imposed the duties of feudal service on the free and patrimonial estate, which alone had been saved in the shipwreck of the more splendid fortunes of his house. His ancestors had been invested with the powerful duchies of Bavaria and Saxony, which extended far beyond the limits laid down in modern geography; for, from the Baltic sea to the confines of Rome, they were either obeyed or feared; and in the quarrels of the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the former appellation was derived from the name of their progenitors in the female line. The genuine masculine descent, however, of the princes of Brunswick must be explored beyond the Alps; for the venerable tree which has since overshadowed Germany and Britain was planted in the Italian soil. As far as our light can reach, we discover the first founders of the race in the Marquesses of Este, of Liguria, and, perhaps, of Tuscany. In the eleventh century, the primitive stem was divided into two branches; the elder migrated to the banks of the Danube and the Elbe; the other more humbly adhered to the neighbourhood of the Adriatic. The dukes of Brunswick and the kings of Great Britain are the descendants of the first; the dukes of Ferrara and Modena were the offspring of the second.

Passing by the intermediate genealogies of the house of Brunswick, through the course of the middle centuries, as not generally interesting to the majority of our readers, it would only be necessary very briefly to show in what way arose the proximity of blood, which, in the early part of the last century, caused the Brunswick line to be called to the throne of these kingdoms. The marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., in 1485, by uniting the pretensions of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, put an end to the factions that had for so many reigns desolated England, and

stained the land with the blood of the flower of its princes, nobility, and gentry. Henry left issue by this marriage a son, Henry VIII., and a daughter, married to James IV., king of Scotland. On the failure of the line of Tudor, in the person of queen Elizabeth, James VI. of Scotland, and first of that name in England, succeeded, as matter of right, to the crown, being descended, in the third generation, from Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, and, consequently, uniting in his own person all the claims of the different lines that had successively wielded the sceptre of England.

Elizabeth, daughter of James I., married Frederic, Elector Palatine, and afterwards king of Bohemia. By this prince she had a daughter, Sophia, married to Ernestus, elector of Hanover, and representative of the house of Brunswick, Hanover, Lunenburg, Wolfenbüttel, Zelle, &c., whose posterity, by virtue of the Act of Settlement, now fills the throne of Great Britain.

Those who augured a prosperous reign to George III., from the circumstance of his ascending the throne on the anniversary of the victory of Agincourt, deemed it an equally auspicious circumstance, that an heir apparent should be born on the forty-eighth anniversary of the accession of the house of Brunswick. We will not stop to discuss the merits of these auguries, considering them in the same light as we do the geese of the Roman augurs, and especially as the pages of history are open to every one to determine their truth or fallacy; but in regard to the battle of Agincourt, if the prophecy had run that the reign of George III. was to be distinguished by the most ruinous wars, in one of which the American possessions were to be lost for ever to the British crown, and in another of which a national debt was to be accumulated, which sits as an exterminating incubus on the prosperity and energies of the nation, we consider that it would be rather a difficult task for the sapient augurs to prove that they were not in an error, when they drew their prophecy of the glory of the reign of George III. from his having ascended the throne on the anniversary of the battle of Agincourt.

The marriage of George III. with the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz took place on the 8th September, 1761;

and on the 12th August, 1762, his late majesty, George IV., was born.

Agreeably to the state etiquette, which has always been observed on the accouchement of the queen of England, ever since the birth of the son, or pretended son of James II., the great officers of state are always summoned to attend the birth of a royal infant; and, on this occasion, there were present, the Princess Dowager of Wales, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Rutland; the Lords Hardwicke, Huntingdon, Talbot, Halifax, Bute, Masham, and Cantalupe, and all the ladies of the bed-chamber and the maids of honour. The whole party assembled in a room adjoining to that of the Queen, having the door open leading into it—the Lords arranging themselves at the greatest possible distance—the Ladies having no other restriction placed upon them, than to preserve a solemn silence, the accomplishment of which was a task of almost insuperable difficulty. Delicacy had, in those days, so far the ascendancy, that the obstetrical art was principally practised by females, and, on this occasion, the Queen was delivered by Mrs. Stephen, Dr. Hunter being in attendance amongst the ladies of the bed-chamber and maids of honour, in case of his professional assistance being required.

Her Majesty was delivered exactly at twenty-four minutes after seven o'clock, P. M., having been in labour above two hours. A messenger was immediately despatched to the king with the pleasing intelligence, and so delighted was his Majesty with the news, that he presented the bearer of it with 500*l*.

The privy council assembled with all possible despatch, and it was ordered that a form of prayer for the Queen's safe delivery should be prepared by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, to be used within the Bills of Mortality on the following Sunday, and throughout the King's dominions the Sunday after it had been received by the respective ministers.

Nothing can mark more strongly the character of the age, than the periodical publications that were put forth on this occasion. The Queen refused all medical assistance from

the other sex, and was attended by a Mrs. Stephen. The obstetric science was then but faintly understood amongst us, for Dr. Denman, the celebrated father of the present common-sergeant of London, had not written his famous work on midwifery; and reference was always made to the ancients from Aristotle to Galen, and from him to the doctors of the Sorbonne. Hence the press had teemed with numerous speculations or rather prophecies upon her Majesty, some not very delicate; and whilst a few denied her being *enceinte*, others entered into peripheral phenomena, and pretended to predict the sex and future destinies of the child. Mrs. Draper, who was the royal nurse, had published a pamphlet upon the subject; but such matter would not be tolerated amongst us at present, and we must submit such subjects as features of an age gone by. Slander was mixed up with these publications; and when the Queen appeared at the installation of the Garter, at St. George's Hall, Windsor Castle, four weeks after her accouchement, several violent articles were written upon the indelicacy of so early an appearance; whilst she, on the other hand, was defended by her friends, upon the plea of the customs of her country being different from those of England. A man who then ruled London, with respect to opinion, as powerfully as the king himself, the Rev. Mr. Simpson, preached against the Queen's indelicacy; but he was answered in a pamphlet by the Rev. Dr. Vandergucht, who cited all that could be found upon the subject from the Bible: and although any quotation of that description was then omnipotent, still the doctor's Dutch name was mistaken by the vulgar for German—he was considered as a partisan of the Germans, and met with very severe usage from the populace.

The birth of the Prince diffused a general joy throughout the nation, and congratulatory addresses were voted to their Majesties by both Houses of Parliament, by the city of London, the two Universities, and the other great bodies corporate of the kingdom. We shall not, however, occupy our pages with the transcription of any of these addresses, for considered as mere matters of form they are unworthy of notice, and as the vehicles of the most fulsome adulation and bombastic

panegyric, they are deservedly the objects of ridicule and contempt.

We cannot, however, refrain from inserting a most excellent one from the Quakers, which was presented to his Majesty on the 1st of October, and read by Dr. Fothergill, as follows :—

‘ To George the Third, King of Great Britain and the dominions thereunto belonging.

‘ The humble address of Protestant subjects, the people called Quakers.

‘ May it please the King,

‘ The satisfaction we feel in every event that adds to the happiness of our sovereign, prompts us to request admittance to the throne, on the present interesting occasion.

‘ The birth of a Prince, the safety of the Queen, and thy own domestic felicity increased, call for our thankfulness to the Supreme Dispenser of every blessing ; and to the King our dutiful and unfeigned congratulations.

‘ In the Prince of Wales we behold another pledge of the security of those inestimable privileges, which we have enjoyed under the monarchs of thy illustrious house—kings, distinguished by their justice, their clemency, and regard to the prosperity of their people ; a happy presage that, under their descendants, our civil and religious liberties will devolve, in their full extent, to succeeding generations.

‘ Long may the Divine Providence preserve a life of so great importance to his royal parents, to these kingdoms, and to posterity ; that, formed to piety and virtue, he may live beloved of God and man, and fill at length the British throne with a lustre not inferior to his predecessors.’

The young Prince soon became the object of general solicitude, and for the gratification of the public, it was announced before he was twelve days old, that his Royal Highness was to be seen at St. James’s, from one o’clock till three, on drawing-room days. The crowd of ladies, whom this offer tempted to flock to court to see the royal infant, and taste her Majesty’s caudle and cake, soon became immense ; the daily expense for cake alone was estimated at 40*l.*, and the consumption of wine was greater than could have been expected. All persons of fashion were

admitted to see the Prince, under the following restrictions, viz., that in passing through the apartment they stepped with the greatest caution, and did not offer to touch his Royal Highness. For the greater security in this respect, a part of the apartment was latticed off in the Chinese manner, to prevent curious persons from approaching too closely.

It may be easily conceived that this extraordinary proceeding was visited with the severest censure of the reflecting part of the English people ; they discovered in it neither propriety nor utility ; on the contrary, they saw that it was attended with a considerable degree of danger to the health of the royal infant, on whom, perhaps, depended the legitimate succession of the Brunswick dynasty. There was also something decidedly anti-national in the exhibition ; and although custom might have tolerated it in the latitude of Mecklenburg Strelitz, it was not consistent with the habits and prejudices of the English people.

His late Majesty may be said to have come into the world at a most eventful period, when incidents were passing away, or occurring, or nigh at hand, of the greatest importance to the national honour and welfare. The long and prosperous reign of George II. had fixed the House of Hanover in secure possession of the British throne. The welcome accession of George III., the first sovereign of that House born in this country, had crushed every vestige of hope in the few remaining friends of the exiled Stuarts ; the multiplied victories of a war, of which the people were, notwithstanding, beginning to complain, had opened the way for honourable and promising negotiation, and with the prospect of peace rendered certain, just as the Prince was born, both the character and condition of the country were rapidly improving ; an improvement which his birth was admirably adapted to accelerate, since it gave to people of every rank and condition a gratifying assurance of a legitimate succession of the House of Brunswick.

On the fifth day after his birth, his Royal Highness was created Prince of Wales, by letters patent. The first creation of the title of Prince of Wales in the Royal Family of England, occurred in the reign of Edward I. This sovereign, to conciliate the affections of the Welsh, whom he had subdued, removed his Queen Eleanor to Caernarvon Castle, in North

Wales, in which place, on the 25th April, 1284, she was delivered of a son. On this event, the sagacious Edward summoned the Welsh barons, and demanded if they would be willing to subject themselves to a native prince. Happily they consented, and having sworn to yield him obedience, he nominated the royal infant in a subsequent charter, Edward, Prince of Wales, since which auspicious event, the eldest son and heir apparent of the King of England has retained that title. His late Majesty Geo. IV. was the twenty-first prince of the royal family of England who has borne that title.

The mode of conferring the rank of Prince of Wales is by investiture, with a cap-coronet, gold verge and ring, and by issue of letters patent under the Great Seal. Notwithstanding the title of Prince of Wales has often merged in the Crown, it has never yet been bestowed on any but the heir apparent to the crown.

The Prince of Wales is born Duke of Cornwall, and immediately entitled to all the revenue belonging to that Duchy. We shall have occasion hereafter to refer to that circumstance, as it formed the basis of a long dissension between the Prince of Wales and his illustrious father, arising from a well-founded claim, which the former made to all the arrears of revenue which had accumulated during his minority, and to which, as forming a part of his patrimonial inheritance, he considered that he possessed an inalienable right.

The Prince of Wales, as heir apparent to the Crown of Great Britain, is likewise hereditary Steward of Scotland, Duke of Rothsay, Earl of Carrick, and Baron of Renfrew. These were titles conferred by Robert III., King of Scotland, on the Prince, his eldest son, in 1399, and perpetually appropriated to the future Princes of Scotland, as soon as born. Since the accession of James I., they have been continued to the Prince of Wales, in Great Britain. It may be here remarked as a singular circumstance, that the Prince of Wales enjoys no Irish honours. All the junior branches of the royal family are Earls of Ireland; the heir apparent being the only one of his house who does not derive some title of honour from the Sister Island.

The ceremony of christening his Royal Highness was per-

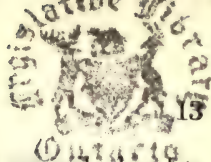


H. Adlard sculpt

A correct copy of the first Portrait painted by Francis Cotes, R.A.
GEORGE IV.
IN HIS INFANCY.

FROM THE ORIGINAL, NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

London: Published by Thomas Kelly, 17, Paternoster Row, 1830.



formed on the 18th September, in the great council chamber of his Majesty's palace, by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. The godfathers were his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and his most Serene Highness the reigning Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz, who was represented by the Duke of Devonshire, being the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's household. The god-mother was her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales.

The infantine establishment of his Royal Highness was at this time composed of the following persons:—governess, Lady Charlotte Finch; deputy governess, Mrs. Henrietta Coulthworth; wet-nurse, Mrs. Scott; dry-nurse, Mrs. Chapman; necessary woman, Mrs. Dodson; Jane Simpson and Catharine Johnson, rockers.

It was at this stage of his Royal Highness' infancy that the drawing of him was taken, which embellishes this work. It was always a favourite picture of his late majesty George III., as it was the exact resemblance of two individuals in whom his heart, at that time, took the greatest interest.

It was stated by many of the journals of the day, that the Queen suckled her own children; and some of them, in the plenitude of their wisdom, found, in the supposed circumstance of the Queen having suckled the Prince of Wales, a cause for that predilection which she always entertained for him, in preference to any of her other children. It is, however, contrary to etiquette for any Queen of England to suckle her own children, the reasons for which must be obvious; and, at a future period, in the case of the Princess Charlotte, it was the cause of the most poignant grief, when it was announced to her, that she would not be allowed the enjoyment of one of the sweetest occupations of the mother.

The first public address presented to the young Prince of Wales was from the Governors of the Society of Ancient Britons, who solicited his patronage for an institution which educates, clothes, and supports a number of poor and destitute natives of the Principality from which his Royal Highness derives his title: the address was presented on St. David's day, the 1st of March, 1765, when the Prince was not quite three years of age. 'Your royal parents,' said the address, 'remember

no period of their lives too early for doing good ; and when a few years shall call forth your virtues into action, your Royal Highness may, perhaps, reflect with satisfaction upon your faithful ancient Britons thus laying themselves at your feet.' The Prince made the following reply : ' Gentlemen, I thank you for this mark of your duty to the King, and wish prosperity to the charity.'

The Prince had been tutored several days previously, by his royal parents, in regard to the manner in which he was to conduct himself on this occasion ; and the journals of the day announced, that he delivered his answer with great propriety and suitableness of action. At the conclusion the Prince presented the treasurer of the charity with a donation of 100*l*.

The royal parents were remarkably domestic ; in addition, therefore, to the usual solicitude about an infant heir to the throne, their first-born became an object of unexampled care, —care that was thought excessive, if not injurious, at that early period, and which, although the motive of it must be ever praised, afterwards did harm to the character of the Prince, by rendering the transition from youth to manhood, and from restraint to independence, much too sudden and abrupt.

In the course of the year 1765, his Royal Highness was elected a Knight Companion of the most noble Order of the Garter, but his installation did not take place until the 25th of July, 1771.

On the 3d of March, 1766, the Prince of Wales was inoculated for the small-pox, by Pennel Hawkins, Esq., Sergeant Surgeon Extraordinary to his Majesty and Surgeon to her Majesty and the household, in the presence of their Majesties and his Majesty's Sergeant Surgeon, Cæsar Hawkins, Esq., Sir Clifford Witringham, Sir William Duncan, and John Pringle, Esq., physicians. The Duke of York was inoculated at the same time.

In the inoculation of the royal children, their Majesties had many strong and inveterate prejudices to surmount, which, at that time, had taken hold of the public mind, in regard to the impious act, as it was then stigmatised, of imparting a disease to a human being, with which it had not pleased heaven to afflict it. The most decided and illiberal opposition was every-

where manifested towards the practice of inoculation; and some over-zealous and puritanical preachers extended their zeal so far, as to denounce it from the pulpit, as of the most impious tendency;—that it was most criminally and unjustifiably interfering in the concerns of heaven, and, consequently, its extreme vengeance was denounced on those who dared to follow such a guilty example. Their Majesties came in for their full share of abuse from those worthy and enlightened souls, in thus endangering the lives of their two elder sons, and thereby frustrating the hopes of the nation of a legitimate successor to the crown. In despite, however, of all the anathemas from the pulpit, their majesties, convinced that inoculation was rather a blessing and a boon of Providence than a crime committed against it, continued to inoculate all their children; and it may, in a great measure, be attributed to that perseverance and strength of mind which their majesties evinced on this occasion, that the system of inoculation ultimately overcame the obstacles which were so illiberally thrown in the way of its adoption.

At this time an unexpected and alarming illness of the King, while it drew forth the sympathy of the nation for him, fixed the attention of all classes upon the royal heir, then a child of only four years old. The apprehension of a regency in the state, and a guardianship to the Prince, for so long a period as fourteen years, was a feeling peculiarly unwelcome; but providentially it was removed almost as soon as it arose. Still the known liability of the king to sudden disease, tending to affect the royal mind as well as body, caused public attention and anxiety, in no ordinary degree, to be continually directed to the rising Prince. Almost idolized by the people, when he was the subject of diseases incident to childhood, from which there is no royal road of escape, and which then prevailed with more certainty and severity than at present, every family seemed to feel as though one of its own members were in danger, and the tidings of his recovery were the signal for ebullitions of delight, and more confident anticipations that his life would be long, and his reign prosperous and happy.

It was on the 25th of October, 1769, that the Prince of Wales, then only in his seventh year, the Bishop of Osnaburg

(the late Duke of York), Prince William, and the Princess Royal, held their first drawing-room; the latter was only then in her second year; and certainly it could only have entered into the head of a German Princess, who had been accustomed to infantine drawing-rooms, to place the children of the King of England in such a truly ridiculous and anti-British situation. The historians of those days inform us, that the young Princes received the company with the utmost grace and affability; but on the other hand, the caricaturists were not idle, for there is a caricature in existence, in which, in ridicule of these infantine drawing-rooms, the Prince of Wales is made to enter the room with a kite on his back, the Bishop of Osnaburg with his hobby-horse between his legs, Prince William is spinning his top, and the Princess Royal is behind a screen receiving some very indispensable assistance from her nurse. The ridicule with which these drawing-rooms was received soon induced the Queen to discontinue them; and, indeed, her Majesty found it a difficult matter to persuade either the Prince of Wales or the Bishop of Osnaburg to attend them; and on one occasion, when the royal youths were engaged in a game of cricket, and were called upon to dress for the drawing-room, they returned a message, that the company were to wait till the game was over.

The following account of the royal children at this time will be read with peculiar interest, especially as it contains a trait of the character of the illustrious individual who is now seated on the throne of these realms.

Mrs. Chapone, who was niece of Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Winchester, formerly preceptor to Geo. III., and used to spend much of her time at her uncle's residence at Farnham Castle, relates the following anecdotes of the Royal Family in a letter to Mr. Burrows, dated August 20, 1778. 'Mr. Buller went to Windsor on Saturday; saw the King, who inquired much about the Bishop; and hearing that he would be eighty-two next Monday, 'Then,' said the King, I will go and wish him joy.' 'And I,' said the Queen, 'will go too.' Mr. B. then dropt a hint of the additional pleasure it would give the Bishop if he could see the Princes. 'That,' said the King, 'requires contrivance; but if I can manage it, we will all go.' On the

Monday following, the royal party, consisting of their Majesties, the Prince of Wales, Duke of York, Duke of Clarence, the Princess Royal, and Princess Augusta, visited the Bishop. "The King," continues Mrs. Chapone, "sent the Princes to pay their compliments to Mrs. Chapone; himself, he said, was an old acquaintance. Whilst the Princes were speaking to me, Mr. Arnold, sub-preceptor, said, "These gentlemen are well acquainted with a certain ode prefixed to Mrs. Carter's Epictetus, if you know any thing of it." Afterwards, the King came and spoke to us, and the Queen led the Princess Royal to me, saying, "This is a young lady, who, I hope, has much profited by your instructions. She has read them [Letters on the Improvement of the Mind] more than once, and will read them often; and the Princess assented to the praise which followed with a very modest air. I was pleased with all the Princes, but particularly with Prince William, who is little of his age, but so sensible and engaging, that he won the Bishop's heart, to whom he particularly attached himself, and would stay with him while all the rest ran about the house. His conversation was surprisingly manly and clever for his age, yet, with the young Bullers, he was quite the boy, and said to John Buller, by way of encouraging him to talk, "Come, we are both boys, you know." All of them showed affectionate respect to the Bishop; the Prince of Wales pressed his hand so hard that he hurt it.'

We now enter upon one of the most important eras in the life of a human being, whether prince or plebeian, and on which may be said, in a great measure, to depend his future success in life; we allude to his education. It has been asserted with great truth, that no man is completely qualified to sit upon a throne who has not been a member of the republic of letters. It is only in the freedom of social communication with the intelligent and the enlightened, without distinction of rank or circumstances, that the human understanding can be properly cultivated. This, therefore, is the best school for the formation of a Prince, for it is there that he will soon learn how to fill his station with satisfaction to himself and benefit to others. The hours of seclusion from the adulation of courtiers, and the servile complaisance of interested attendants, are the most

precious portions of a young prince's time. It is only there that he can leisurely reflect upon the obligations annexed to his title which he wears, and imbibe the salutary persuasion, that unless he become practically acquainted with the undisguised sentiments and dispositions, and especially with the spirit of the people over whom he is one day destined to preside, he will remain totally unworthy of that high destination to which Providence has called him.

It is an observation which has been made by some very acute writers, that the British nation, so jealous almost in every thing else that regards its princes, has been singularly and culpably inattentive to whatever concerns their education. Parliament,—which limits the settlement of the crown,—which points out the religion of the reigning family—which takes cognizance of the marriages of the princes of the blood, and confers on them revenues and establishments, leaves the education of our British princes wholly to the discretion of the reigning sovereign. According to the dictum of the crown lawyers, the education of princes is a matter of prerogative with which the two Houses of Parliament have no right to interfere; and consequently, whenever the point has been agitated in the legislature, as has happened in one or two instances, the answer of the friends of the court to those who perceived, or thought they perceived, something faulty in the system of education pursued with regard to the young princes, has been, that the education of the prince of the blood was a branch of the royal prerogative, and that the mere agitation of the subject was derogatory to the honour of the Crown.

Were the preceptors of a prince endowed with all those rare accomplishments which are so rightly represented as requisite for such a station, he might safely be resigned to the care which would then be taken to form him to virtue, knowledge, and true greatness. But such men are seldom promoted to so high an office, for it is obtained by dexterity, intrigue, and family influence, much more frequently than by desert or integrity of character. Fenelon, for instance, after educating the heir to the crown of France, was banished from court as a man whose maxims were too rigid for the laxity of its morals.

A young prince is sometimes placed under the tuition of a mere teacher of ancient classical erudition: this, doubtless, has its uses, but let those whom it concerns to educate him as a man who is to govern men, bear it constantly in their remembrance, that things, not words, are the only objects of solid knowledge. The great Frederick of Prussia knew perfectly but one language besides his own, and that language was a modern one—the French.

The philosopher in his closet may lay down a theory for the education of a young prince, which, in his judgment, shall appear infallible; yet, when it is attempted to be reduced to practice, how abortive and nugatory will the trial prove! The business of real life is so unlike what sages conceive in their closets, that it is no wonder their most beautiful speculations should often be found utterly inapplicable to its concerns. Nero was the scholar of Seneca, one of the most severe and rigid moralists of all antiquity; but whatever might have been the value of Seneca's instructions, it is certain that a more atrocious monster than his pupil never dishonoured human nature. James I. received his education under the celebrated Buchanan, who was unquestionably admirably qualified to instruct a young prince in the maxims of government; yet it is notorious, from history, that James made but a very indifferent sovereign. Rodolphus II., Emperor of Germany, and who was the contemporary of James, made also a most inglorious figure as a sovereign, and yet both of them had been more carefully instructed than any others that we read of, in all academical erudition, by the most celebrated professors of the time.

If we take a retrospective view of the mode of education which was adopted with Geo. III., we shall be able to trace to that source many of the evils which displayed themselves so conspicuously during his reign, to the manifest injury of the country. He was educated under the immediate influence of the Earl of Bute, and the Princess Dowager of Wales, his mother, in principles far less favourable to civil and religious liberty than those of any of his predecessors of the Brunswick line. The education of George III. is allowed to have been defective, but still it was not so much so as to make

him undervalue sound learning, or render him indifferent to the proficiency of his children. He insisted on a much larger portion of it than he had attained being offered to the Prince of Wales, and he rejoiced to find him both able to appreciate it and ready to make it his own. Perhaps his Royal Highness did not so willingly submit to the discipline of his noble governors and reverend tutors, which, in fact, was strict beyond all precedent and propriety. The system derived its severer features of restraint and seclusion from the authority of the King, whose firmness in other matters sometimes rose to obstinacy, and who was often pertinacious when he only thought himself prudent. But if the Prince was trained according to the royal mandate, the agents chosen to execute the stern decree were well fitted for their work. On the other hand, the Queen, bred up in foreign prejudices, could not be thought to have imbibed any sentiments very friendly to the essential principles of a free constitution, and therefore probably embraced with eagerness that system in which she had herself been educated, and which was, perhaps, neither in consistency nor assimilation with the court to which she had been introduced as the head, nor in conformity to the spirit of the people over whom she was to preside. It is true, indeed, that she interfered little in politics, at least in the early part of the sovereign's reign, and that little was always managed with the greatest caution and secrecy. The effect was very visible, but it was very difficult to determine from what quarter the cause proceeded. She, however, on several occasions, had sufficient opportunity to show, that in political sentiments her principles were the same as those of her august partner, or, in other words, that they leant to those notions of prerogative and high church power, which ever since the revolution, and previously to the reign of George III., have been considered as highly dangerous to the liberties of the subject.

The partialities of the Queen could not fail to accord with the King's strong and inflexible Tory bias; and when we take into our consideration that the King himself was strongly tinctured with German predilections, we cannot be surprised to find that a system of education was pursued in regard to the young Princes, something less liberal than ought to have been

adopted towards the royal sons of a great and a free people. The English Universities cannot easily forget the affront that was tacitly put upon them, when the junior branches of the royal family were sent to Germany for the completion of their studies, where instead of being instructed in those free and liberal principles which are compatible with the British constitution, and which ought to form the main feature in the education of every British prince, they were instructed in the despotic and aristocratical notions of German royalty. Bereft of the advantages of a representative government, absolute power is the foundation of a German throne, and a subserviency to the laws is not to be expected from those princes, who by their sole fiat can enact or rescind any law, which in its effects may appear favourable or prejudicial to their own personal interests. In England, however, the case is different: the Prince is as amenable to the laws of his country as the meanest of his subjects; and for this reason, every attempt to extend the prerogative of the crown, as placing the monarch above the operation of those laws, is always regarded with an eye of jealousy and distrust. The national feelings of the two countries are therefore in direct opposition to each other, and our surprise naturally ceases, when we behold in our native princes, who were educated in Germany, a display of those high despotic principles which are decidedly foreign and anti-British.

The dignity of his station, and the important place which he held in the state as heir-apparent to the crown, prevented the Prince of Wales from being sent to Germany to receive the finishing part of his education; in other respects, however, the plan of his Royal Highness's tuition was such as was naturally to be expected from the known, and in this instance, uncontrolled prejudices of his royal parents. It was an attempt to ingraft the free and independent spirit of the British constitution on the despotic and absolute principles of German aristocracy. The difficulty of the task consisted in reconciling these discordant principles, without exhibiting a decided inclination to either; or at least in so concealing the preponderancy of the latter, that it might not prove offensive to a people so jealous of their rights and liberties, and so proud of their in-

estimable constitution, as the English. The persons selected for the important task of forming the mind of the heir-apparent were men estimable in the highest degree for their moral character and various literary attainments; but at the same time it was remarked, with some concern, that in their political principles they were high churchmen and Tories, which, although they at that time bore the ascendancy in the councils of the nation, are, in many essential points, at variance with the principles established at the Revolution.

The Earl of Holderness was the first preceptor to the Prince of Wales; his sub-preceptor being Monsieur de Salzes, the intimate friend of Dr. Maclaine, Chaplain to the British Embassy at the Hague, and the admired translator of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. A particular degree of notoriety, however, accompanied him, as being the uncle to the celebrated Maclaine, the fashionable highwayman, who was considered the genuine Macheath of the day.

Lord Holderness and De Salzes retired from office at the same time; and the changes which now took place in the education of the Prince are generally, and we believe justly, attributed to the former nobleman, whose enlarged and liberal mind would not endure the restrictions which were imposed on him, and who at the same time observed, with regret, that a secret influence was at work, which he considered as fraught with danger to his illustrious pupil. He also felt himself incompetent to contend against a power, which, by the very secrecy and darkness of its proceedings, could, in one moment, subvert the fabric which it was his particular design and purpose to establish.

A considerable degree of obscurity exists respecting the quarter whence this secret influence emanated: some persons pointed to the Dowager Princess of Wales and Lord Bute; and, considering that those two personages generally carried on their proceedings like the mole, in the dark, and the results of which generally came upon their victim like the explosion of a mine, it is by no means improbable that they were the real individuals whose secret influence succeeded in effecting a change in the education of the Prince. It has also been stated that particular books had been recommended to the perusal and

study of his Royal Highness, which Lord Holderness considered to be highly improper, and which inculcated principles inadmissible in the education of a British Prince. He was also convinced that his interest and influence were on the decline; and, finding that some very unnecessary and unhandsome obstructions were thrown in his way, he requested leave to resign, which was granted: this resignation was immediately followed by the retirement of Mr. Smelt, the sub-preceptor, on a pension, of whose character Mr. Delany says, 'that it was of the most noble and delicate kind, and deserved the pen of a Clarendon to do justice to it.'

When we consider the freedom from magisterial control that is allowed at our public schools, and the perfect liberty that our princes of the blood enjoy after they are emancipated from the trammels of their minority, we shall not be able easily to assign a sufficient motive for the system of restraint and seclusion that was so rigorously adhered to in the education of the Prince of Wales. We have read of the discipline of camps, and we have seen the etiquette of courts; but we are utterly at a loss to conceive what benefit was expected to be derived from a system, the obvious effect of which was to keep a young and high-spirited Prince entirely ignorant of the world until the very moment when he was about to enter into it, and into a sphere of it abounding with the greatest danger and temptations. If the mariner be called upon to steer his vessel through an unknown sea, and he has been designedly kept in ignorance of the rocks and shoals in the midst of which he will have to navigate his vessel, to whom is the blame to be attached if he be wrecked?—to the mariner himself, or to those who so wilfully kept him in ignorance of the dangers with which he would have to contend. One of the happy effects of a public education is, that young men are gradually seasoned and familiarized to a commerce with the world, by their boyish intercourse with their equals at school; and if princes, on their first entrance into public life, show somewhat less of discretion or prudence than other youths of high rank perhaps evince, is it to be imputed to something radically wrong in their dispositions, or to a defective mode of education?

It has been often said that a prince should keep none but

the most splendid company, and we perfectly acquiesce in the rule—with the proviso only, that by this company is not meant the exclusion of the most entertaining and instructive part of society: it is, however, only by divesting ourselves of pride and superciliousness, that we are able to enjoy the pleasures and advantages of persons of this description, and it remains to be decided in what particular station of society they are principally to be found. Confined within a very limited circle, beyond which he was not allowed to digress, the Prince of Wales saw mankind only as through an inverted medium: he might have been taught the theory of human life, but of the practice, which is alone valuable to an individual in life, he was kept in the most culpable ignorance. Surrounded by the formal ceremonies and etiquette of a court, and which, being formed on the German model, carried the observance of all its punctilios to the utmost nicety, his early life resembled the dull and monotonous round of the brute in the mill, who is not allowed to diverge a step from the track prescribed to him, and who possesses no other superiority over the machine which he impels, than the mere satisfaction of his physical wants. How unsociable, therefore, and how unwise, must those dispositions be, which, from a false and misguided attention to the insipid and disheartening forms of etiquette, will debar a young and aspiring mind from attaching himself to those objects or persons from which a particular and decided degree of mutual improvement is to be acquired, merely because they happen not to be in possession of a certain degree of rank or wealth! How great must be the ignorance of those people, who do not know that it is in the society of those who have raised themselves into notice by their talents, much more than in that of those who are distinguished solely by their birth or riches, that a prince will become acquainted with the world! No persons, from their very situation in life, are usually less conversant with the variety of characters that compose the great body of mankind, than the nobility: immured, as it were, within the pale of their grandeur, and restrained from moving out of it by the haughtiness in which they are so frequently bred, they enjoy a gloomy pre-eminence, undisturbed by the freedom which the inferior classes of the community carry with them into their

social meetings. Why, then, should a prince (and there is no punctilio of a court which demands the sacrifice) who was yet in the spring-tide of his life, and who could look forward with a well-founded hope for a considerable interval of years before his exaltation to the throne, have been debarred the most efficacious means of looking thoroughly into that world of which the knowledge is so perpetually inculcated, as the only sure means of qualifying him to rule with credit to himself and benefit to the nation at large?

It must nevertheless be allowed, that the education of the Prince of Wales was conducted on a plan perfectly well calculated to render him a respectable scholar and an accomplished gentleman; but on the other hand, it was ill calculated to make him either a prudent prince or a great monarch. It was conducted with so much austerity, with so little regard to the valuable principles of practical life, that the moment of his Royal Highness's emancipation was that of a prisoner released from confinement—it was the daring and boundless flight of the eagle, which had been long chained to the earth by some tyrannical power; and no surprise ought to be excited, if it were at first wild and eccentric in the extreme. Hitherto debarred from the enjoyment of those pleasures so natural to youth, he plunged at once into the joys of society with all the avidity of the fainting traveller who hastens to the gushing spring to allay the torments of his thirst.

We should justly lay ourselves open to the charge of illiberality, and perhaps of falsification, were we here to cast the slightest insinuation on the character of those eminent individuals who were selected as the preceptors of the Prince. They cannot be supposed to be answerable for the defects of a plan, in the construction of which, it is probable, they never were consulted. The preceptors of the Prince were not left to adopt a system of education, according to their own judgment and discretion; but the plan in all its details was strictly prescribed to them, with the most peremptory injunction not to deviate from it in the slightest degree. The error, therefore, lay on those who framed the system of education, not on those who were appointed to carry it into execution; for it would be the height of injustice to the memory of one of the preceptors,

and a neglect of the majority of those who are the survivors, were we not openly to declare, that the persons to whose care the charge of the juvenile years of the Prince of Wales was committed, were men eminently qualified for the due execution of so important a task.

Dr. Markham, who, in February 1771, was appointed preceptor to his Royal Highness, was a clergyman who had risen in his profession solely by his own merit. At the early age of thirty, he had the distinguished honour of being chosen first master of Westminster school; and during fourteen years, he discharged with the highest reputation the laborious duties of that useful and honourable employment. His merits, while he presided over one of the first schools in the kingdom, were not overlooked, and in 1767 his public services were rewarded with the deanery of Christchurch. Under the vigilant guardianship of Dr. Markham, Christchurch preserved its accustomed pretensions to superiority; and seldom less than from twenty to thirty youths, of the first families of the kingdom, were intrusted to his care. On his consecration to the bishopric of Chester, he resigned the deanery of Christchurch, and soon after was appointed preceptor to the Prince of Wales.

The sub-preceptor of the Prince, at this period, was Dr. Cyril Jackson—a man who, like Dr. Markham, had advanced his fortune in life by his diligence in the pursuit of knowledge, and the variety of his literary attainments.

Although Dr. Markham was the accredited preceptor, Lord Bruce was about this time appointed governor—a man for whom interest, not ability, obtained the appointment. His pupil actually surpassed him in classical attainments, particularly in his knowledge of the Greek; and some anecdotes having been buzzed about the court, in which his Lordship was represented to be literally worsted by his pupil, and becoming thereby the butt of all the satirists of the court, his Lordship resigned his appointment, and, as a reward for his *eminent* services, received the earldom of Aylesbury. On this resignation, the Duke of Montague succeeded to the superintendence of the royal education; and in the year 1774, the king so far deviated from his accustomed plan of personally

superintending the education of the Prince of Wales, that he established a separate household for him at the Queen's palace, at which a royal chaplain was appointed to reside, for the purpose of reading prayers every day.

Amongst the numerous candidates for an office attended with so many present advantages and prospects of future promotion, was the celebrated but unfortunate Dr. Dodd. Although he was supported by the strong and powerful influence of Lord Chesterfield, he did not succeed in obtaining the appointment, which it was supposed was owing to the personal disapprobation of the King himself, to whom the character of Dr. Dodd was apparently well known.

Whilst these changes took place in the governors of the education of his Royal Highness, a change also took place in the preceptors: Dr. Markham was succeeded by Dr. Hurd, afterwards Bishop of Worcester; and Dr. Jackson was succeeded by Mr. Arnold, tutor of St. John's College, Cambridge.

The latter gentleman was a person of the most promising genius, and, as a reward for his services, received the canonry of Windsor. His mind and constitution were, however, too delicate for the incessant study to which he applied himself, and he died insane in 1802.

Of the cause of the removal of Drs. Markham and Jackson various rumours were at that time afloat; and amongst others it was stated, that the question whether it were expedient that princes should be scholars had occasioned no trifling degree of agitation in the domestic cabinet of Buckingham House. It was opined by some of the leading members of that cabinet, that the sources of knowledge which Drs. Markham and Jackson had opened to the minds of the young princes were rather of too enlarged and liberal a nature, and that, in their instructions on the polity of nations, they had entered rather too largely into the question of the expediency of placing a limit to monarchical and aristocratical power, in opposition to the rights and liberties of the subject. A court without a cabal would be one of the greatest anomalies of civilized life; and that a secret and clandestine influence was used in the removal of Drs. Markham and Jackson, in the same manner as had been exemplified in the removal of Lord Holderness, the journals

of the time are all of one accord : and one writer, speaking of the change of the Prince's preceptors, says, that the erudite Markham, and the scientific Jackson, were removed to make way for the supple Hurd, and the insignificant Arnold.

We cannot, however, subscribe entirely to the stigma which was at the time attempted to be cast upon the new preceptors of the Prince ; for Dr. Hurd was, in every respect, an amiable prelate, a polished scholar, and a man of the most exemplary morals. He, as well as Mr. Arnold, had been celebrated tutors at Cambridge, in the same manner as their predecessors had been distinguished ornaments of the sister university. It might appear, therefore, that the dismissal of Dr. Markham and his colleague was not designed to convey any censure on their character, but that its real intent was, to afford his Royal Highness the united advantages that might be expected from those who excelled in the different modes of education adopted by the two universities. It must, however, be admitted, that this change of preceptors, particularly in reference to their being members of the two sister universities, was not only highly injudicious, but was attended with most unpleasant consequences to the royal pupil. Equal and eminent as two men may be in scholastic learning, and capable as they may be individually of undertaking and completing the education of a British prince, yet it very rarely occurs that two men can be found, especially if they have been educated in different schools, whose ideas and principles so exactly assimilate, that a system of education established by one of them can meet with the entire concurrence and approbation of the other. Thus, if an architect proceeds to the erection of an edifice according to his own plan and design, and, previously to its completion, he is dismissed and another is appointed to complete the work, he considers it to be his first duty to expose the defects of the original plan, to overthrow every part which has been already erected, and to commence the building from its foundation, according to his own improved and superior design. Thus was it situated with the Prince of Wales in regard to his preceptors ; and his mind, kept in a state of vacillation between opposite systems, threatened not to be the depository of any fixed principle either political or scientific. The plan of his education,

as pursued by Dr. Markham, was, it is true, in its leading principles, laid down by the King himself; and it were natural to suppose that the successor of Dr. Markham would be subject to the same restrictions, and to the same annoying system of parental interference. A change of preceptors very seldom takes place without a corresponding change in the system of education; and we believe that few individuals ever underwent greater annoyance and vexation, from the frequent changes which took place in his governors and preceptors, than the Prince of Wales—independently of the effect which it must have had on his personal feelings.

We are, however, induced to believe, that Dr. Markham was not dismissed on any objectionable ground, from the circumstance, that he always retained a very enviable portion of the royal favour, which certainly would not have been the case, had he not, in the discharge of his duty, given satisfaction to the King. The same arguments may be applied to Dr. Jackson, who, although he ceased to fill an office about the Prince's person, sustained no diminution of the royal favour in consequence of his dismissal, or, more correctly speaking, his resignation; for, in 1783, he was appointed dean of Christchurch, and, on the death of Archbishop Newcombe, he was offered the primacy of Ireland. We may, therefore, we think, safely affirm, that neither Dr. Markham nor Dr. Jackson was removed from their royal charge, on account of any incapacity or negligence in the discharge of their duties; but it was done to procure the royal youth some advantages of education which their successors were judged better qualified to impart, on account of their peculiar habits of study.

According to the busts and portraits of the young Prince at this period, he was of an elegant, though, for his age, of rather a robust figure; and his open countenance corresponded with what was reported of him, that he was subject to sudden and violent impressions, was of a warm temper, but was generous and friendly. It must, however, be confessed, that his temper sometimes was ungovernable. He had been early taught to know the dignity of his station, and any affront given to that dignity was seldom overlooked. We shall have, in a future place, to mention an act, resulting from this warmth of temper

which might have brought him, in justice to the offended laws of his country, to close his life under the axe of the executioner.

The following circumstance is mentioned by Mr. Arthur Young, as having occurred when the Prince of Wales was scarcely more than twelve years of age, and which will go some way to prove that utility was not entirely banished from the system of his education. A spot of ground, in the garden at Kew, was dug by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and by his brother the Duke of York, who sowed it with wheat, attended the growth of their little crop, weeded, reaped, and harvested it solely by themselves. They threshed out the corn and separated it from the chaff, and at this period of their work were brought to reflect, from their own experience, on the various labours and attentions of the husbandman and the farmer. The Princes not only raised their own crop, but they also ground it, and having parted the bran from the meal, attended to the whole process of making it into bread, which, it may well be imagined, was eaten with no slight relish. The King and Queen partook of the philosophical repast, and beheld with pleasure the very amusements of their children rendered the source of useful knowledge.

It is a trait, highly honourable to the feelings of his late Majesty, that he ever continued to hold his preceptors in high respect; for a proof of which we have only to mention the following anecdote, which reflects equal credit on his sensibility as a man, and on his condescension as a Prince. On one of his summer excursions, through some of the western counties of England, his Royal Highness happened to be in the neighbourhood of the palace of the Bishop of Worcester, and, inquiring after the health of its venerable inhabitant, he was informed that his lordship was so infirm that he seldom stirred out of his episcopal residence, but that, in other respects, his faculties remained unimpaired, and that he possessed as good a share of health and spirits as usually fall to the lot of persons at his advanced period of life. On receiving this information, his Royal Highness despatched one of his attendants to the palace of his venerable and amiable preceptor, to ask his permission to wait upon him, understanding that the state of his

health did not permit him to venture abroad. The good bishop, as may readily be conceived, was charmed with the condescension of his Illustrious Pupil, and in suitable terms expressed his grateful sense of the honour which his Royal Highness deigned to show him. An interview succeeded, highly interesting to those who witnessed it, and the Prince left the venerable Prelate penetrated with the kindness, affability, and flattering remembrance of his royal pupil.

In the education of his children, the chief object of George III. appears to have been to teach them every species of useful knowledge, in addition to classical acquirements, in which, even at that period, they were acknowledged to surpass all their contemporaries. For the Prince of Wales and his elder brothers eight hours close application to the languages and the liberal sciences was strictly enjoined, and this arrangement only formed a part of a system of the most unremitting industry. The younger branches of the family were not subject to such a close confinement to study, but in general they were all restricted to the same regulations. Exercise, air, and light diet, were the grand fundamentals in the King's ideas of health and spirits. He himself drank but little wine, and the same system was pursued with the children.

The following translation of the epistle of Servius Sulpicius to Marcus Tullius Cicero, by the Prince of Wales at the age of seventeen, may be adduced as a proof of the progress which he had made in classical learning:—

‘ As soon as I heard your daughter Tullia was dead, I confess I was extremely concerned, as it became me to be at a loss which I regarded as common to us both; and if I had been with you I should not have been wanting to you, but should have openly testified the bitterness of my grief. ’Tis true this is but a poor and miserable consolation, because those who ought to administer it, I mean our nearest friends and relations, are almost equally affected with ourselves, nor can they attempt it without shedding many a tear, so that they appear more to be in want of comfort themselves, than perform that duty to others. I resolved, however, to set down in a short letter to you such considerations as occurred to my mind;

not because they can have escaped you, but because I think your grief has hindered you from attending to them. What reason is there why you should be transported by so immoderate a grief? consider how Fortune has hitherto dealt with us; consider that we have lost what ought to be dearer to us than our own offspring—our country, our credit, dignity, and our honours. This one misfortune more, how can it increase our misery, or what mind is there, which has been subject to such distress, but must now have grown callous, and regard every thing else of little consequence? Is it for her sake that you grieve? but how often must you have fallen into that train of thinking into which I often fall!—which suggests to me that those persons are not the most unfortunate at this time who are permitted to exchange life for death. What is there now which could make her so much regret the loss of life? What affairs? what hopes? what prospects of comfort? Was it that she might pass her life with some nobleman of high rank and qualification? and can you really think that it was within your power, deservedly honoured as you are, to choose out of our present youth a son-in-law to whom you might safely commit a child so dear to you? Or was it that she might bear children, from whose flourishing condition she might have drawn much pleasure, who might have enjoyed a large fortune transmitted to them from their parents, who might have been candidates in turn for the honours of the state, and who might have employed their liberty in the service of your friends? Alas! which of these blessings was not taken away before she was in a condition to bestow them on others? But it is a most shocking thing to lose one's children. True, if it were not much more to suffer and undergo what we now do. Give me leave to relate to you what, on a certain occasion, afforded me some little comfort, and allow me to hope that it may have the same effect upon you. Upon my return from Asia, as I sailed from Ægina to Megara, I began attentively to view the countries that lay around me. Behind me was Ægina, before me was Megara, on my right hand Piræus, on my left Corinth. These cities were at one time flourishing beyond imagination, but are now desolate and in ruins. Thus I began to ruminate with myself—Alas! do we poor mortals resent it so much if one of

us dies, or is killed, whose life is of so short a date, when we see in one spot the many carcasses of so great cities lying before us? Will you not, Servius, check your grief by recollecting that you are born a man? Believe me, I was not a little comforted by that thought. If you please, therefore, try the power of it on yourself. It was but lately we saw many famous men perish, a great empire declining, and all the provinces in the utmost distress; and shall the death of one little woman so grievously afflict me? who, if she had not died now, must, in a few years, have done so, for she was born a mortal. Let me beg of you, therefore, as much as in your power, to call off your mind from brooding over these subjects, and to turn it rather on such as are worthy of your character; consider that she lived as long as it was desirable for her to live, that her fate was joined to that of her country, and that she lived to see her father prætor, consul, and augur—had been married to youths of the greatest distinction*—had enjoyed all manner of happiness—and fell, at last, with the republic. Upon what account can you or she complain of fortune? Above all, do not forget that you are Cicero, one who is accustomed to advise and direct others; and do not imitate bad physicians, who, in the disorders of others, profess that they are conversant in the art of physic, and are not able to cure themselves; but rather follow what you recommend to others, and keep it constantly before your eyes: there is no grief which length of time will not diminish and soften; it is beneath you to wait for that moment, and not to master your grief beforehand by your wisdom. But if there be any feeling in the dead, I am certain that she is very desirous that you should not wear yourself out so with grief for her sake, on account of her filial piety and affection for you. Grant this favour to her, who is now dead, and to the rest of your friends and relations, who sympathize with you in your grief: grant it also to your country, that, if she be in want of your assistance, she may be able to make use of your counsel and advice. And, last of all, since we are fallen into such a situation that we must submit to the present state of things, do not put it into the

* His Royal Highness here deviates considerably from the original, but this latitude is excusable, considering the obscurity which pervades the passage, and which has been often the subject of critical animadversion.

power of any one to say, that you grieve less for your daughter than you do for the misfortunes of the country, and for the victories of her enemies. It does not become me to write to you any more concerning this affair, lest I should appear to distrust your prudence; wherefore, when I have mentioned this one piece of advice, I will conclude my letter. We have seen you bear prosperity in a manner that became you, and acquire great glory from it; now let us perceive that you can bear adversity with equal fortitude, and that you are no more oppressed by it than you ought to be; lest this should appear to be the only virtue you want, among so many. But as to what belongs to me, when I understand that you are a little more composed, I will inform you what passes here, and in what state the province is. Adieu.

‘GEORGE P., 1779.’

It is well known, that the Queen, from the infancy of the Prince of Wales, was constantly, through life, to him the fondest of mothers. Soon after his birth, in addition to the portrait which is given in this work, her Majesty had a whole length portrait of his Royal Highness modelled in wax. He was represented naked. The figure was half a span long, lying upon a crimson cushion, and it was covered by a bell-glass. Her Majesty had it constantly on her toilet at Buckingham House. At the decease of her Majesty, it was exhibited to us; the likeness was still palpable, though the original had outlived the date of the fairy model more than half a century.

Few years passed, it is believed, without her Majesty having his portrait either in miniature, enamel, silhouette, modelled in marble or wax, or in some other style of art. One of the latest, if not the very last, was a miniature head of his Royal Highness, enamelled by Mr. Bone, which he had the honour of placing in her Majesty's hands at Windsor, the year before her death; when a conversation ensued upon the subject, which not only evinced the minute correctness of her Majesty's fond recollections concerning the illustrious original, but was accompanied by a circumstance very flattering to the artist.

It would appear, from the following statement, that the paint-

ing of Mr. Cotes, of her late Majesty Queen Charlotte and the royal infant, is not the only one which was taken of those illustrious personages; for in one of the state apartments at Windsor, is a family piece, representing her Majesty seated with, as it would appear, two of the royal children; one on the lap, a few months old, exceedingly fair, the other a sturdy infant, aged apparently about two years. These are described as the Prince of Wales and Duke of York.

Some years since his late Majesty, going round the collection and describing the pictures to a foreigner of distinction, stopped at this family-piece. Mr. Legg, the principal *cicerone*, had just described it as usual to the party; when the condescending Monarch observed, ‘You must alter your history, Mr. Legg.’ Then, smiling and addressing himself not only to the foreign gentleman, but to the whole party, he observed, ‘That picture was painted by the ingenious Mr. Allan Ramsay, son of the celebrated author of *The Gentle Shepherd*. Now, Mr. Ramsay having, like his father, become celebrated too, fell into the common fault of portrait-painters—undertaking more than he could perform. He engaged to paint, within a given time, the Queen and the Prince of Wales, then an infant in arms, as you perceive. He completed the likeness of the mother, *who might have waited*, but somehow neglected to finish the child, until he had grown into the sturdy boy you see standing before her.’ So that, in fact, it is two portraits of the same child, though in that short space more dissimilar to each other than, perhaps, at any subsequent period.

The birth-day of his Royal Highness was observed at Windsor, on the 12th August, 1786, with unusual splendour. At an early hour in the morning, the Prince, accompanied by his attendants, repaired to the King’s apartments, and there, having partaken of some refreshment, the King, Queen, and children, attended by the Duke of Montague, Lord Bruce, Lady Effingham, Lady Weymouth, Lady Charlotte Finch, &c., went in procession to the cathedral. The Princess Royal and her two sisters walked after their Majesties, the Prince of Wales, and his six brothers, being all habited in blue and gold, following, with their preceptors and attendants on each side. Having arrived at the church-door, they were received by the

provost, prebends, canons, and poor knights, and on entering the cathedral, the organ struck up, and continued playing until their Majesties were seated. The King, the Prince of Wales, the Bishop of Osnaburg, and the Duke of Montague, went to the altar before the service began, and made their offerings of gold and silver, which were received by Drs. Bostock and Lockman in a golden dish. The Prince of Wales and the Bishop of Osnaburg sat under their own banners, and the remainder of the junior branches of the Royal Family, with the ladies of quality and other attendants, sat in the upper stalls on the right hand of the choir. The ceremony being over, the King, Queen, and family retired to their own apartments to dine, and the Prince of Wales, and his three elder brothers, returned to Kew.

On the 22nd September, 1780, the Queen was delivered of a son, who was christened Alfred by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the event itself would have been scarcely worthy of record in this work, had it not been attended with a circumstance, which at that time excited considerable attention, as having a tendency to bring into disrepute and ridicule one of the most important ordinances of the English church, and which exposed not only his Majesty, but also the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the intemperate animadversions of all those, who considered those ordinances as too sacred to be encroached upon, and especially by those, who according to the constitution of the country, ought to have been the foremost and the most conspicuous in the observance of them. The circumstance alluded to, was the selection of the Prince of Wales, the Bishop of Osnaburg, and the Princess Royal, as sponsors to their brother Alfred, they being at the time all minors, and consequently, incapable of fulfilling the sacred and truly responsible duty to which they had bound themselves at the altar. The Prince of Wales had, at this time, given some very unequivocal indications of those libertine propensities which, it is too well known, characterized the years of his juvenility; and, in regard to the other sponsor, the Bishop of Osnaburg, the arrangements were then concluded for his departure for the continent, for the purpose of completing his education.

The question, therefore, began to be mooted whether the ordinance of the church of England, in requiring sponsors at

the christening of an infant, was in itself a solemn obligation, or whether it were to be considered as a simple matter of form ; the duties of which were merely nominal, and which might be neglected altogether, without subjecting the individual who had taken upon himself such a solemn office, to the consequences of the infraction of his duty ; and which, perhaps, as in the present instance, their very age and inexperience prevented them from fulfilling. The three sponsors of Prince Alfred were all in their nonage, and they had been brought to the altar of their God to undertake, in his presence, to perform certain things of which they never thought for a moment after the ceremony was over. This circumstance of minors taking upon themselves the awful responsibility of becoming sponsors, attracted the attention of the ecclesiastical dignities ; and the Bishop of Salisbury, perhaps more bold than wise, ventured to remonstrate with the King on the subject of the three royal minors being made sponsors to their brother, at the same time that not the most partial fulfilment of the important duties to which they had pledged themselves could be expected from them. The venerable bishop, therefore, advised his Majesty to have Prince Alfred re-christened, selecting persons of a proper age and discretion to be his sponsors. This circumstance coming to the ears of the Prince of Wales, and soon after meeting with the officious divine, his Royal Highness accosted him, ‘Have you heard the news, my lord Bishop?’ ‘What news, may it please your Royal Highness?’ asked the bishop. ‘My father,’ replied the Prince, ‘has sent to the sponsors of the Bishop of Salisbury to know how they could so egregiously have neglected their duty, as not to have taught their god-child to hold his tongue when it becomes him.’

The period was now arrived when the Prince of Wales was to be separated from his favourite brother, the Bishop of Osnaburg, who, on the 30th of December, 1780, left Buckingham-House, accompanied by Colonel Grenville, for the Continent. The two brothers had passed the joyous days of boyhood together ; in their sports they had been inseparable, and in all their mischievous pranks, which drew down upon them the displeasure of their royal parents, they mutually screened each other ; and in those cases where the culprit could not be exactly disco-

yered, each of them was willing to bear the reproach, rather than declare the real offender. Nothing could be more affecting than the parting between the young Prince and the royal family; their Majesties wept severely, and the Prince of Wales, in particular, was so much affected with the misfortune of being deprived, for so long a period, of the sole companion of his youth, that he stood in a state of entire insensibility, totally unable to speak, or to express the concern he felt so strongly.

It has been already cursorily mentioned, that the education of the Prince of Wales was conducted on a plan by no means calculated to give him all those advantages, with which it was of so much importance that the youthful mind of the heir apparent to the throne should be stored. The great defect of the plan of the royal education seems to have been a want of attention to make the prince acquainted with actual life. The monarchs who have governed their subjects most happily have been those who have formed their knowledge of human affairs, not from books nor the lessons of their governors and preceptors, but from personal observation and experience. The monastic seclusion and severity with which the Prince was confined to his studies caused his mind to accumulate an unusual store of valuable knowledge, nor was the nation at a subsequent period a stranger to its beneficial results; and it may be added, that to some of its severer features we are, perhaps, indebted for the highest qualifications of the king, and the noblest embellishments of the man. But no sooner did its operation cease than it was found to produce effects, which its royal author and his noble and reverend agents were the first to discern and to deplore. It had too long shut out the world from the view of the Prince, and by not graduating his advance towards the public scenes of life, rendered those scenes, when at last he was at liberty to survey them as he pleased, too novel and enchanting, too luxuriant and overpowering. He had been confined so long, and restrained so much, that when the period of emancipation somewhat suddenly arrived, he deemed it impossible to enjoy too large a portion of the pleasure which presented itself on every hand. On his release from the control of tutors and governors, who had scarcely loosened the rein before they were required to drop it, a number of persons of

a perfectly opposite character were in waiting to celebrate his freedom, and administer to his gratification and delight. Among them the nation must ever lament were certain individuals, celebrated for the splendour of their talents and vices, and in their earliest intercourse with the Prince, much more ready to corrupt his morals by the one, than to enlarge and elevate his mind by the other.

Here we catch the first glimpse of the cause of those painful misunderstandings which took place between the then sovereign and the heir apparent. The early friends of the Prince were in avowed opposition to his Majesty's government, and they soon infused their hatred of ministers and their jealousy of the King into the unsuspecting mind and susceptible heart of their illustrious companion. On political grounds alone, the King had reason to be incensed at their influence over his son; but when to this we add the moral injury they were inflicting on one whom the pious father wished above all things to train for God and his country, we cannot wonder that, wounded by their arts on his royal, his paternal, and his christian feelings, he should have set his face against the men, and treated with rigour the son, who had made them his companions.

It cannot, however, be denied, that on those points in which the preceptors of the Prince were answerable, their duty was well performed. On attaining the years of majority, he was unquestionably the most accomplished young Prince in Europe. His knowledge of the ancient languages was correct and extensive, and of the modern dialects, he could converse with ease and fluency in French, German, and Italian. His attainments as a polite scholar were so universally admitted, that it is unnecessary here to dwell upon them further than to observe, that the best English writers, particularly the poets, were familiar to his Royal Highness; and that on all subjects relating to belles lettres there were few critics who possessed a purer taste or a more refined judgment.

In those accomplishments, which may be deemed rather elegant than necessary, his Royal Highness had made a proficiency equally striking. He had cultivated the science of

music with great success, and, considered with that indulgence which is always due to an amateur, he excelled, both as a vocal and as an instrumental performer. His taste in the fine arts has in many instances been strikingly exemplified, and the interest which he took, at a subsequent period, in their prosperity, may be judged from the munificence with which his artists have ever been rewarded.

The manner in which the birth-day of his Royal Highness was celebrated at Windsor, in the year 1781, is thus described in a letter from Windsor:—

‘We had the most brilliant company here yesterday of any this season. Great numbers of the nobility and gentry of both sexes came to compliment their Majesties and the royal family on the Prince’s birth-day. In the evening, the terrace was so crowded, that the King, Queen, and Princesses did not walk more than half an hour, and then went into their apartments.

‘The public celebration of this day of festivity did not commence till this morning, when there was a review in the park, and firing vollies. About two o’clock the royal family went from the Queen’s house to an apartment in one of the towers, whilst the terrace underneath was crowded with the greatest number of nobility of both sexes, seen together for many years. The Yorkshire Volunteers, commanded by Lord Fauconberg, were drawn up on King Charles’s Bowling-green, about three o’clock, and fired a *feu de joie*, which was followed by three cheers from the battalion, who immediately formed into files, and marched off, with their colours lowered in honour of the royal presence.

‘After this, their Majesties and the Prince of Wales, with the rest of the royal family, proceeded to St. George’s Hall, where they dined with about eighty of the nobility; and in the evening there was a grand ball at the Castle, which did not break up till five the next morning, and was remarkably brilliant and crowded. Windsor was also illuminated at night, and the day closed with bonfires and other demonstrations of joy.

‘The entertainment was upon the same plan as those given by his Majesty at the Queen’s Palace, with this difference, that the three tables were in one room, viz. St. George’s Hall. Their Majesties, Prince Edward, Princess Royal, Princess Augusta,

and Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll, Ladies Effingham, Egremont, and Weymouth, supped at a small table, facing the company, under a canopy.

‘At the second table was his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Lady Augusta Campbell on one side, and one of the young Ladies Dunmore on the other side; the Duke of Cumberland, Duke of Dorset, Marquess of Graham, and all the young nobility that danced.

‘At the third table were the Dukes of Queensberry and Montagu, Lords North, Boston, Weymouth, Southampton, &c. Ladies Clarendon, Boston, Fauconberg, North, Dunmore, Courtown, &c. There were thirty-four covers at each table.

‘The Prince of Wales danced with Lady Augusta Campbell; the Duke of Cumberland danced some part of the night with the Princess Royal, and the remaining part with the young Lady Dunmore; Prince Edward danced with the Princess Augusta; and the Duke of Dorset with the Princess Royal. Their Majesties, &c. supped at twelve o’clock, and retired at five.’

The mention of this fête would perhaps have been considered as not possessing sufficient interest to find a place in this work, had it not been for the purpose of alluding to a particular individual who was then one of the greatest beauties of the British court, and who consequently was the chosen favourite of the Prince of Wales. This individual was Lady Sarah Campbell, the selected partner of the Prince at the table and the ball; and perhaps a more angelic creature never captivated his affections. The assiduities which the heir apparent to the crown may show towards any particular lady, have something in them of a wholly different character than those which pass between individuals whose rank and station are equal; the former can have only *one* object in view—the possession of the person—for the usual expectation of any matrimonial union resulting from the familiar and affectionate intercourse cannot for a moment be entertained; and, therefore, to the strictly virtuous female, whom no blandishments, however royal, can divert from the path of modesty, cannot be received but with the most repulsive indignation. The keenness of the female eye sees at once *the aim*, where any great disparity of rank exists; and to the

honour of Lady Sarah Campbell, be it said, that she did see *the aim* of the Prince's attentions; and, although she might have loved—and if one line in the following composition of his Royal Highness be true, she might have received and given 'the stolen kiss,'—yet all beyond was preserved as pure as the pearl taken from its native shell. She saw the danger with which she was surrounded; the chain was not yet so strongly entwined around her but it might be broken. She did break it,—and became the wife of one of the most amiable noblemen of the day.

It is with great pleasure that we are enabled to present to the public the following lines, written by his Royal Highness, and addressed to Lady Sarah Campbell, and for which we are indebted to one of the most favourite female companions of his late Majesty. It was sent to her the day after the fête which we have described:—

Oh! Campbell, the scene of to-night
Has open'd the wound of my heart;
It has shown me how great the delight
Which the charms of thy converse impart.

I've known what it is to be gay,
I've revell'd in joy's fleeting hour,
I've wish'd for the close of the day,
To meet in a thick-woven bower.

'Twas there that the soft-stolen kiss,
'Twas there that the throb of our hearts,
Betray'd that we wish'd for the bliss
Which love, and love only, imparts.
But Fate will those hearts oft dis sever,
By Nature design'd for each other;
But why should they part? and for ever!
And forced their affections to smother.

How short and how blissful the hour
When round each lone hamlet we stray'd;
When passion each heart could o'erpower,
And a sigh the sweet feelings betray'd.
O whence is that glance of the mind
Which scenes that are past oft renews;
Which shows them, in colours refined
With fancy's bright glitt'ring hues?

Now, sweet be thy slumbers, my friend,
And sweet be the dreams of thy soul ;
Around thee may angels attend,
And visions of happiness roll.
Whilst I——

From particular motives we forbear to give the conclusion.

A very alarming circumstance happened at this time to the Prince of Wales, which might have been attended with the most disastrous consequences. He was invited to dine with Lord Chesterfield, at his house at Blackheath, when the whole party having drank too freely, they set their invention to work as to what acts of mischief they could commit. Amongst other acts, one of the party let loose a large dog of a ferocious disposition, which immediately flew at one of the footmen, who was looking on, tore one of his arms in a shocking manner, and nearly strangled a horse. The whole company now formed themselves into a compact body and assailed Towzer, who defended himself with great resolution, and he had just caught hold of the skirts of the coat of his Royal Highness, when one of the party, by a blow on the head, felled the dog to the ground. In the confusion, however, the Earl of Chesterfield fell down the steps leading to his house, and very severely injured the back part of his head. The Prince of Wales, who scarcely knew whether he had been fighting a dog or a man, jumped into his phaeton, and there fell fast asleep, leaving the reins to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, who conducted him safely to town.

The period when a young man of illustrious rank and splendid fortune attains his majority forms an important epoch in his life. Our young nobility, educated for the most part at schools and at the universities, when they come of age have generally acquired a tolerable share of experience in the world. Their companions, in their outset in life, are generally those with whom they have associated at school ; and their previous habits of thinking and acting for themselves, which our public seminaries are so admirably calculated to teach, fit them to enter on the great theatre of the world with credit and advantage.

With the Prince of Wales, however, the case was wholly

different; he had been educated, indeed, under the ablest masters, and his progress in all the useful, and many of the ornamental branches of learning, reflected equal honour on the diligence of the teachers and the capacity of the pupil; but a knowledge of real life formed no part of the system of his Royal Highness's education, and he made his entrance into public life, under the disadvantage of having passed his youth in a state of seclusion and restraint. In order to give some idea of the restrictions that were imposed on the Prince to prevent him mingling with society, we will relate the following anecdote. About a twelvemonth before his Royal Highness attained his legal majority, he received the invitations of some of the most distinguished nobility to make a tour through the country during the summer months, when their respective residences should be prepared for the reception of their illustrious guest. This invitation, as may be conceived, was eagerly accepted by the young Prince, and preparations were actually made for his journey; but when the consent of his father was asked, the King refused to permit the design to be carried into execution. A system of restraint pushed to this extent could not fail to have an injurious influence on the conduct of his Royal Highness at his first introduction to public life; for, in proportion to the force of the restraint which was put upon him, so were his gay and wanton wanderings, when he found himself emancipated from the trammels of parental and scholastic authority.

In one of these cases, when the consent of the King was asked, it was refused on the ground that his Majesty had it himself in contemplation to proceed on a party of pleasure, in which it was his royal will that the Prince of Wales should accompany him; and with the view of giving to the Prince some real and substantial ground for his refusal, his Majesty projected a trip to the Nore, which took place in the month of August, 1781. His Majesty and the Prince embarked in different yachts, and as they proceeded down the river, they were saluted as they passed Woolwich Warren by the ships in Long Reach, and by Tilbury and Gravesend Forts, and about four in the afternoon they anchored in Sea Reach. At five o'clock in the morning, the yachts got under way, and arrived at Black-

stakes about nine. The King and Prince went on shore, and visited the dock-yard and new fortifications: about twelve, they left the yard, and returned to the Nore, where they were saluted by Vice-Admiral Parker and his squadron, who had at that moment come to an anchor. In the evening, the King and the Prince went on board the *Fortitude*, on which ship the Admiral's flag was flying: his Majesty retired into the great cabin, where the captain and officers of the squadron were graciously received, and had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand. The King and Prince, after visiting the several parts of the ship, returned to their yachts, and sailed for Chatham, where they arrived at nine o'clock the same day.

This trip of his Majesty was regarded at the time as merely undertaken to alleviate the pain of disappointment which the Prince experienced, in not being allowed to accept of the invitation of the nobility to visit their country residences, and it met with the ridicule which it deserved. A witling of the age thus describes it—

The King and Prince went to the Nore,
They saw the ships and main;
The Prince and King they went on shore,
And then they both came back again.

Amongst the various accomplishments which distinguished his Royal Highness, his skill as a musician was particularly conspicuous. He was a very superior performer on the violoncello, having been instructed on that instrument by the celebrated Crossdill, whose unrivalled performances were the theme of universal admiration, not only in England, but on every part of the continent. The merit of this eminent man was greatly aided by his early intercourse with the polite world, and his Royal Highness was so much pleased with his gentlemanly deportment and elegant manners, that he made him his companion, and honoured him with his company at all his musical parties. Crossdill retired early from the profession, but appeared at the coronation of his late Majesty, being the only performer who had attended the coronation of George III., which he did as one of the choristers of Westminster Abbey.

His Royal Highness was not merely an instrumentalist, but he was also a vocal performer of no mean celebrity. Sir Wil-

liam Parsons, the Master and Conductor of his Majesty's Band, had the honour of instructing his Royal Highness in singing; and it was very justly and happily said of him, that he was not only a musician amongst princes, but a prince amongst musicians. His Royal Highness possessed not only a very good voice, but a very correct knowledge of the science. He was a very effective member of the Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch and Glee Club at the Thatched House Tavern, which he attended very frequently, conversing with the utmost familiarity with all the professors, and occasionally taking a part in the different compositions, which were performed, with great effect. He is the reputed author of the second verse to the glee of the Happy Fellow—'I'll ne'er,' &c.; and also of the additional verse to the song, 'By the gaily circling glass,' which he was accustomed to sing, in his convivial moments, with great effect.

Although his Royal Highness was so partial to Crossdill, it did not prevent his enjoying the gratification of hearing and appreciating the merits of Cervetto, his talented competitor. Speaking of the performances of these eminent men, his Royal Highness was heard to say, that the execution of Crossdill had all the fire and brilliancy of the sun, whilst that of Cervetto had all the sweetness and mildness of the moon-beam. It was the delight of his Royal Highness to attend the Italian Opera, merely to hear Cervetto's accompaniments of the recitatives, which were acknowledged to be unrivalled. It was a banquet for the ear, he said, at which the appetite increased in proportion as it was administered to. At one of the last musical parties of his late Majesty, he commanded a trio of Corelli's to be performed on two violoncellos and a double bass by Cervetto, Dragonetti, and Schrum; the latter was a musician attached to his Majesty's household, but whose health did not permit his accepting of any public engagement; his great merits were therefore only known to a few individuals of the profession, and to the illustrious individual who patronised him.

His Royal Highness was, with his royal brothers the Dukes of Cumberland and Cambridge, a director of the King's Con-

cert of Ancient Music, at the Hanover-square Rooms, selected the music for the first night's performance, and presided in the directors' box. He also patronised the annual benefit of the Royal Society of Musicians, given in conjunction with the above-mentioned concerts. He was also the patron of the Philharmonic Society, but, from some supposed personal slight which was shewn to a lady who was then considered to stand the highest in his estimation, he at a future period withdrew his attendance from the Ancient Concerts, although he continued to support them by his subscription.

At the period of his life of which we are now treating, he was the great and liberal supporter of all musical concerns; the Opera, the Pantheon, the Professional Concerts; Vauxhall, and his favourite resort the Rotunda, at Ranelagh Garden, which he was accustomed to visit almost every evening, enjoying the promenade, surrounded by and discoursing with all the elegantes of fashion, and the object of universal admiration.

But he was also the object of notoriety on another account, for he frequently degraded himself by being the principal in the broils which took place in the gardens; and it is an accredited fact, that he had always a number of resolute fellows at hand, who were prepared to rescue him, when he was likely to be overmatched. To this circumstance may be attributed the patronage which he afterwards bestowed on the most celebrated pugilists of the day; for he had himself been tutored by Angelo in the art of self-defence; and, urged on by the courage natural to his family, he was often led on to be the aggressor, especially if the object in dispute were a female. It was, however, generally in disguise that his Royal Highness committed these indiscretions; and the masquerades, which were then more prevalent than at present, were the grand scenes of his libertinism. A ludicrous circumstance has been mentioned, connected with these frolics, which we have heard related by one of the parties who was present. At a masquerade in which the Prince of Wales appeared in the character of a Spanish grandee, accompanied by four of his squires, he paid particular attention to a nun, who appeared to be under the protection of a youthful sailor. The assiduities on the part of the grandee

were evidently unwelcome to the fair Ursuline, and the gallant tar threatened instantaneous chastisement, if any further provocation were given ; the grandee, however, was not to be daunted, and he was very ably supported by his squires, who, boasting of the high and noble descent of their master, declared it to be an act of the greatest condescension in him to hold any parley with a common English sailor. Some high words arose, and some taunting expressions were used, tending to imply the opinion, that the fair nun possessed no real pretensions to the character which she had assumed. At last, some allusion having been made to the ladies of Portsmouth Point, the choler of the sailor could no longer brook the indignity, and a general row was the consequence. The constables were called in, and the disputants, in a posse, were marched off to the watch-house ; the Spanish grandee leading the way in all his gorgeous finery. On arriving in the presence of the constable of the night, the culprits were called upon to declare their real characters. The grandee unmasked, as did also the sailor.—‘ Eh ! William, is it you ? ’ exclaimed the former : ‘ Eh ! George, is it you ? ’ exclaimed the latter. The sailor was no other person than our present sovereign. The whole of the party burst into a loud laugh. The constable was confounded when he saw the heir-apparent of the crown before him :—he received a guinea, and the parties retired to complete the frolics of the night.

His Royal Highness was deeply concerned in the affairs of the Opera House, and after that theatre was unfortunately destroyed by fire, in 1785, he, from a sense of justice, sided with the old proprietors and creditors under Mr. Taylor, in consequence of the Marquess of Salisbury, then Lord Chamberlain, aided by the Duke of Bedford, granting a licence to O’Reilly for an Italian opera at the Pantheon ; but after this theatre was also destroyed, an accommodation was entered into through the influence of his Royal Highness, by which the licence was again transferred to the old proprietors in the Haymarket, but saddled with an incumbrance of 30,000*l.* occasioned by losses incurred at the Pantheon.

It is perhaps not generally known that a certain ambassador at one of the northern courts owes his elevation principally to the skill which he displayed at Carlton House on the vio-

lncello, the favourite instrument of his Royal Highness. It would, however, be premature, at this early period of the Prince's life, to enter into any detail of certain acts which led to that nobleman's aggrandisement, and his subsequent expatriation as an ambassador, after having incurred the displeasure of his royal master; but it deserves to be mentioned, as rather a curious coincidence, that two of the most confidential servants of his Royal Highness owed their elevation to their skill in music.

On entering on that part of the life of the Prince of Wales, when the passions were first excited, and he may be said to have entered the vestibule of the Temple of Venus, we are fully aware that we are treading on most delicate ground, and that the task is one of difficulty so to steer the middle course, as on the one hand not to avert our view from the actual truth, and on the other, not to overstep the bounds prescribed by modesty and decorum. The veil might be drawn from before certain scenes, the exhibition of which might be highly pleasing to the depraved appetite of the sensualist or the libertine; but strongly indicative as they might be of the real character of the individual, and in some respects necessary to complete the portrait in all its darker shades, yet the general interests of society demand that they should be studiously kept in the back ground, so indeterminate and obscure, that although their reality may be apparent, their real features cannot be distinguished. It must also be considered that those who by their arts and wiles first inveigled the youthful Prince into scenes of dissipation and profligacy are now far beyond our censure or our praise. The eyes of beauty, which beamed upon him with love and admiration and glowing passion, have been long since closed to the scenes of this world, and the historian can only point to them as the objects from which the character of the future monarch of the country received its wayward bias, and, it may be added, some of its worst impressions.

It has generally been believed, that Mrs. Robinson was the first object of his Royal Highness's affections, and considered as the first act of public notoriety, it may with some justice be regarded as true; but there are certain sexagenarians now living,

the members of the stiff and ceremonious court of Geo. III., who remember the beautiful but ill-fated Harriot Vernon. The aurora of this girl's life was bright and splendid, its setting dark and dismal. At the age of seventeen, at the time when the Prince was approaching his majority, she was received as a maid of honour into the royal household, and she had not been long a resident in the palace before her black piercing eyes and her sylphlike form attracted the notice of the youthful Prince. The strict and secluded manner in which his Royal Highness was brought up, prevented, for a time, all familiar intercourse between them, but it happened that the apartments which were allotted for the residence of the Prince looked exactly upon the rooms inhabited by the maids of honour, and it was from the windows that the Prince and the first object of his love conversed,—not by words, but by signs and gestures, and they were too expressive of the mutual feelings of their hearts to be misunderstood by either. Still, the difficulty of obtaining a private interview appeared insurmountable. The unbending etiquette of a court; the secluded life to which the Prince was subject; the strictness, amounting to severity, with which all his actions were watched; the jealousies and intrigues which were set on foot to discover the attachments of the Prince, especially to the youthful beauties of the nobility, with whom he occasionally, but very rarely associated, all tended to make the lovers despair of accomplishing the summit of their wishes. Through the medium, however, of Lord Malden, afterwards the Earl of Essex, and who subsequently made such a conspicuous figure in the negotiation with the celebrated Perdita, the Prince contrived to correspond with the beautiful object of his passion, and a clandestine meeting was appointed in a retired part of the gardens at Kew. The greatest Marplot, however, in the early amours of the Prince of Wales was his brother, the late Duke of York. Brought up and educated together; their sports and pastimes the same; attached to each other by truly fraternal love, they were, with the exception of those hours which were devoted to their graver studies, the inseparable companions of each other, and consequently one of the greatest difficulties to be surmounted, to prevent the detection of the lovers, was the

manner in which the Duke of York was to be disposed of. There was, however, one noble trait in the character of the Prince of Wales, and that was a sense of the most inflexible honour, which threw a redeeming shade over the follies of his early life, and gave to many of his actions that pleasing romantic cast, which forms such a striking contrast with the usual scenes of common life. Noble, generous, and confiding in himself, he fancied that his brother possessed the same sentiments and dispositions; nor was he mistaken in the estimate which he had formed of his character. He therefore determined, on this occasion, to make a confidant of his brother, and the sequel will show that it was this very circumstance which saved the lovers from detection. On the night appointed for the meeting, it was the opinion of the Prince and of Harriot, that the sun moved slower towards the west than on any other evening, but darkness came at last: disguised in one of Lord Malden's great coats, the Prince hastened to the appointed spot;—there was Harriot Vernon,—the object of his ardent passion—of his second, and, as he then conceived, of his unalterable love. It was, however, perhaps the guardian spirit that was watching over the innocence of the lovely, yielding girl, that prompted the King, just on that evening, and just at that critical moment, to command the presence of the Prince of Wales to play a game at chess,—but the Prince was not to be found. The Duke, anxious for the safety of his brother, hastened to the place of assignation: never, perhaps, did the Prince of Wales regret his knowledge of the game at chess more than at this moment; one more, and as sweet a rose-bud as ever bloomed on its parent-stem, would have lain defoliated at his feet; but the barrier was broken down, although the citadel was not yet gained. The conquest, however, was not long retarded; it fell, after a faint resistance, and the triumph of the victor was complete.

We will throw a veil over the future relations of this beautiful girl with the Prince of Wales, and we wish that we had it in our power wholly to exonerate his Royal Highness from the charge of neglect and indifference towards her after she had sacrificed to him all that was the most dear to her on earth. He had enjoyed the kernel—the shell was not worth his keeping,—and he threw it away to hasten in search of another

which had yet something of value to give him. The tears which she shed are to his account; and the sighs which rose from her breaking heart must have often burst on his ear, and startled him in the midst of his midnight orgies, as the sound of some accusing spirit telling of the innocence which he had destroyed.

That the royal parents were not entirely ignorant of the predilection of his Royal Highness for the beautiful Maid of Honour may be deduced from the following conversation which took place between the Queen and his Royal Highness; and it was conjectured, at the time, that her Majesty purposely introduced the subject to give her an opportunity of letting the young libertine know that she was not so ignorant of his amours as he supposed her to be.

‘Well,’ said her Majesty, ‘taking it on the whole, the life of a Maid of Honour is a very monotonous one.’

‘I perfectly agree with your Majesty,’ said the Prince; ‘it must be dulness itself: for what can be more vexatious to the spirits, than to make one of a formal procession through the presence-chamber to the drawing-room; never to speak but when she is spoken to; to make an occasional one of six large hoops in a royal coach; to make up, at least, two new court suits a-year, and to aid the languor of an easy party at a side-box in a royal play?’

‘And, George, is there no other act which a Maid of Honour performs?’ asked the Queen, significantly.

‘O yes,’ replied the Prince, ‘she goes to plays, concerts, oratorios, &c., *gratis*; she has physicians without fees, and medicines without an apothecary’s bill.’

‘But you have forgotten one very material act,’ said the Queen.

‘Very likely;’ said the Prince, ‘the acts of a Maid of Honour formed no part of my education.’

‘Then I will tell you one,’ said the Queen, ‘of which you have lately attained the knowledge; and that is, you were right when you said that a Maid of Honour goes to plays and concerts and oratorios *gratis*; but you forgot to add that she also flirts with young Princes, and goes to meet them by moonlight;—and is that also *gratis*?’

The Prince was completely confounded. ‘His Majesty

requires your presence in the library,' said the Queen. The Prince took the hint and retired, stung with mortification at the rebuke which he had received.

A few days previously to this conversation Harriot Vernon had ceased to be an honourable maid—the day subsequent to it she was no longer a Maid of Honour.

It cannot be concealed that one of the greatest faults of the Prince of Wales, at this time, was his unbounded propensity to gallantry; he had formed a connexion with certain persons, whose principal aim appears to have been to exalt him in his own opinion, and who servilely fell into all his views for the purpose of their own aggrandizement. There was no act too grovelling nor too base to which they would not stoop, to ingratiate themselves in his favour—there was no virtue which they would not attempt to undermine, to pander to his passions. It must be admitted that they were men of superior talents and education; but as the companions of a Prince naturally addicted to libertinism, they were perhaps on that very account the very worst men that he could have selected as his associates. In manners they were themselves debauched and profligate—in fortunes they were broken, and it was for the amendment of the latter that they looked up to the Prince of Wales. The period was fast approaching when a separate establishment was to be formed for the Prince, commensurate to his rank as the heir-apparent to the Crown; and the uncontrolled command of an income adequate to the support and dignity of that exalted station was looked forward to as the event which would enable them to enrich themselves, and this they well knew could be effected in proportion as they administered to the gratification of his governing passions. It was, therefore, a part of their plan to entangle him in nets, from which he could not extricate himself without their assistance; they became the confidants of his actions, the depositaries of his secrets; and thus he insensibly fell into their power, which they knew how to wield to their advantage whenever the opportunity presented itself.

The Prince of Wales was indebted to Nature for a fine and handsome person; to art for a graceful exterior, and the most polished manners. His accomplishments were of the first order, but his flatterers were incessantly employed to make him

believe that they were much greater than they really were. They inspired him with the belief that, in regard to female favours, he had only to ask and to receive; and it must be acknowledged that a great number of the blooming women, who by their beauty adorned the court of his mother, required little or no persuasion to concede to his wishes; they even appeared to be vain of the honour of being thought in possession of such personal attractions as to captivate the affections of such a prince, and so far from repelling him in his advances, they encouraged him—in many instances anticipated him—and in all gloried in their conquest. With every fresh amour his appetite appeared to be sharpened—with the possession of each object his self-opinion and his natural inconstancy increased. Like the bee, he roamed from flower to flower, sipped the honey, but never visited that flower again. That these amours often led him into some serious scrapes, may be easily imagined; in many instances he had to contend with the jealousy of the husband, or the wounded honour of the brother, or, perhaps, what was still more dangerous, and more liable to lead to an exposure, the envy and hate of other females, who were aspiring to his affections, and who, consequently, could not endure the triumph of a rival. The following is one of those cases in which he was extricated by the mere presence of mind of one of his confidential associates who resided in the palace:—

One of the most celebrated beauties of the British court at this time was Mrs. M——, whose husband is still living, and who enjoyed a situation in the household, with apartments in the palace as his residence. His avocations frequently required his personal attendance in town, and it was during these temporary visits that the Prince succeeded in ingratiating himself in the good opinion of his angelic wife; but it happened that one of those events took place which the imps of mischief are sometimes so industriously and provokingly employed in bringing about for the purpose of marring the happiness of human beings, when it is the least expected by them. Mr. M—— had on one occasion expressed his determination to remain in town during the night, as he did not expect that his business could be completed so as to admit of his return during the day. As might be expected, the advantage of this opportunity was

not to be lost ; it was most anxiously embraced by both parties, and the sleeping apartment of the Prince was on that night to be tenantless. It happened, however, that the business of Mr. M—— was finished sooner than he expected ; and as the hour of midnight struck from the tower of the palace, he was heard knocking at the outer door of his apartments in the court-yard. Consternation filled the breasts of the hitherto happy lovers—to escape out of the room was impossible ; a detection would be the inevitable ruin of one of the parties, and the indelible disgrace of the other. In this emergency no other resource was left but concealment in a small adjoining room, but then the confinement would continue the whole of the night, and the escape in the morning, when the whole of the household would be in motion, could not be expected to be accomplished without a discovery. But there was no alternative ; the Prince slipped on his clothes, and hurried into the adjoining room. He was, however, rescued from his distressing situation by the address of Mr. Cholmondely, who in this amour was the confidant of the Prince, and who, on seeing Mr. M—— knocking at the door of his apartments, hurried towards him, and addressing him, said, ‘ My dear M——, I am truly rejoiced at your return ; something rather of an unpleasant nature has happened to the Prince, and he commanded me to desire your attendance in my apartments immediately on your return. Accompany me, therefore, thither without delay, and I will hasten to apprise the Prince that you are in attendance.’ There was nothing by any means improbable in the Prince being in some dilemma, as it was by no means a case of rarity, and Mr. M—— therefore most willingly accompanied Mr. Cholmondely to his apartments, where he was politely invited to repose himself until Mr. C. went in search of the Prince. The sequel may be easily foreseen ; Mr. Cholmondely hastened to the apartments of Mr. M——, liberated the Royal lover from his confinement, and hastening back to Mr. M——, he informed him that the Prince had retired to rest ; and on the following morning Mr. M—— was informed that the business had been arranged without his interference.

During the earlier years of the Prince of Wales, his passions were vehement, and his temper unmanageable ; but his gene-

rosity was unbounded, and his faults appeared to be those which observation and experience would materially alter. To literature or to science he was not, however, much attached; and his amusements were chiefly those which unfortunately encouraged expensive habits and dangerous associations. Yet on the Prince of Wales the hopes of the nation were centered; and, habitually kind and indulgent towards their rulers, the English viewed, with a favourable eye, the follies of his youth, and predicted a maturity of great and generous principles. The first event, however, which peculiarly attracted public attention, and which occurred prior to the Prince having attained his majority, tended, in some measure, to alter public opinion. On entering upon that subject a great degree of delicacy is required in the relation, not only in regard to the illustrious subject of these memoirs, but also as far as it respects the fame of one, whose beauty, whose talents, and whose misfortunes, cannot fail to interest every susceptible mind in her favour. There are few of our readers who have not heard or read of the lovely, beautiful, and in many respects highly-talented Mrs. Mary Robinson. This lady was the wife of a careless, neglectful, and profligate young man, who left her, with her fascinating, mental, and personal attractions, exposed to the gaze and blandishments of libertine rank and fashion. A separation had taken place between them; and on an introduction to Garrick and Sheridan, she was encouraged to adopt the stage as the means of her future subsistence. She accordingly came out at Drury-lane Theatre, in the character of Juliet, in which she was eminently successful, and ultimately obtained an engagement, at a high salary, to enact the principal characters in tragedy and comedy.

At the period when Mrs. Robinson first attracted the attention of the Prince of Wales, she was in the twenty-first, and his Royal Highness in the nineteenth year of his age. She has herself left us the history of her intercourse with the Prince, written at a season when the heart deals with sincerity—in a season of sickness and dejection; when the gay prospects of her early life had vanished from her eyes, and nothing remained for her but an existence, struggling with personal inconvenience, debility of frame, and unavailing regrets. The narra-



H. Adlard Sculp.

MRS. ROBINSON.

Stroehling Pinx.

tive which she has left us of this connexion carries with it indubitable evidence of its veracity, and though some allowance must be made for one who speaks, or, perhaps, to use a more appropriate phrase, who rather pleads in her own behalf, still an air of candour and sincerity so pervades that portion of her memoirs to which we more particularly allude, that we feel no hesitation in using her own materials to give the narrative of the Prince's first *public* introduction into the world of gallantry ; we say public—for although it was well known that his Royal Highness had, like a wandering bee, been sipping the sweets from many an opening flower, and in which the bee too often left its sting behind ; yet it was only some of the airy spirits who hovered about the dark recesses of the gardens of Kew, or inhabited the sylvan haunts of Richmond's groves, who could tell the tale of how the lovely rosebud fell defoliated, to wither and die neglected. With Mrs. Robinson, however, the Prince may be said to have publicly exhibited himself in the temple of Venus, and it must be admitted that his knee was never bent before a more lovely or more angelic votary of the goddess, for she looked, without doubt, as she herself said in the play,

‘A bank for Love to lie and play on.’

Mrs. Robinson commences her narrative, by stating, that ‘the play of the Winter's Tale was, this season, commanded by their Majesties ; I never had performed before the royal family, and the first character in which I was destined to appear was that of Perdita. I had frequently played the part, both with the Hermione of Mrs. Hartley and Miss Farren, but I felt a strange degree of alarm when I found my name announced to perform it before the royal family.

‘In the green-room I was rallied on the occasion ; and Mr. Smith, whose gentlemanly manners and enlightened conversation rendered him an ornament to the profession, who performed the part of Leontes, laughingly exclaimed, “By Jove, Mrs. Robinson, you will make a conquest of the Prince, for to-night you look handsomer than ever.” I smiled at the unmerited compliment, and little foresaw the vast variety of events that would arise from that night's exhibition.

‘As I stood in the wing opposite the Prince's box, waiting

to go on the stage, Mr. Ford, the manager's son, presented a friend who accompanied him ; this friend was Lord Viscount Malden, afterwards Earl of Essex. We entered into conversation during a few minutes, the Prince of Wales all the time observing us, and frequently speaking to Colonel (afterwards General) Lake, and to the Honourable Mr. Legge, brother to Lord Lewisham, who was in waiting on his Royal Highness. I hurried through the first scene, not without much embarrassment, owing to the fixed attention with which the Prince of Wales honoured me : indeed, some flattering remarks, which were made by his Royal Highness, met my ear as I stood near his box, and I was overwhelmed with confusion.

‘ The Prince’s particular attention was observed by every one ; and I was again rallied at the end of the play. On the last curtsey, the royal family condescendingly returned a bow to the performers ; but just as the curtain was falling my eyes met those of the Prince of Wales, and with a look, that *I never shall forget*, he gently inclined his head a second time ; I felt the compliment, and blushed my gratitude.

‘ During the entertainment, Lord Malden never ceased conversing with me ; he was young, pleasing, and perfectly accomplished. He remarked the particular applause which the Prince had bestowed on my performance ; said a thousand civil things, and detained me in conversation till the evening’s performance was concluded.

‘ I was now going to my chair which waited, when I met the royal family crossing the stage ; I was again honoured with a very marked and low bow from the Prince of Wales. On my return home, I had a party at supper, and the whole conversation centred in encomiums on the person, grace, and amiable manners of the illustrious heir-apparent.

‘ Within two or three days of this time, Lord Malden paid me a morning visit. Mr. Robinson was not at home, and I received him rather awkwardly. But his Lordship’s embarrassment far exceeded mine ; he attempted to speak—paused—hesitated—apologized : I knew not why. He hoped I would pardon him ; that I would not mention something he had to communicate ; that I would consider the peculiar delicacy of his situation, and then act as I thought proper. I could not

comprehend his meaning, and therefore requested that he would be explicit.

‘After some moments of evident rumination, he tremblingly drew a small letter from his pocket. I took it, and knew not what to say. It was addressed to *Perdita*. I smiled, I believe rather sarcastically, and opened the billet. It contained only a few words, but those expressive of mere common civility; they were signed *Florizel**.

‘“Well, my Lord, and what does this mean?” said I half angrily.

‘“Can you not guess the writer?”—said Lord Malden.

‘“Perhaps yourself, my Lord?”—cried I gravely.

‘“Upon my honour, no!” said the Viscount, “I should not have dared so to address you on so short an acquaintance.”

‘I pressed him to tell me from whom the letter came. He again hesitated; he seemed confused, and sorry that he had undertaken to deliver it. “I hope I shall not forfeit your good opinion;” said he, “but”—

‘“But what, my Lord?”

‘“I could not refuse—for the letter is from the Prince of Wales.”

‘I was astonished—I confess that I was agitated, but I was also somewhat sceptical as to the truth of Lord Malden’s assertion; I returned a formal and a doubtful answer, and his Lordship soon after took his leave.

‘A thousand times did I read the short but expressive letter; still I did not implicitly believe that it was written by the Prince. I rather considered it as an experiment made by Lord Malden, either on my vanity or propriety of conduct. On the next evening the Viscount repeated his visit, we had a card party of six or seven, and the Prince of Wales was again the subject of unbounded panegyric. Lord Malden spoke of his Royal Highness’ manners as the most polished and fascinating; of his temper as the most engaging; and of his mind as the most replete with every amiable sentiment. I heard these praises, and my heart beat with conscious pride, while memory

* *Perdita* and *Florizel* are two characters in the ‘*Winter’s Tale*,’ and those who are acquainted with that comedy will easily trace the signification of these adopted names.

turned to the partial but delicately respectful letter which I had received on the preceding morning.'

For some months a confidential correspondence was carried on between these celebrated parties, through the agency of Lord Malden; and Mrs. Robinson, amongst other tokens of inviolable regard, received the Prince's portrait in miniature, painted by the late Mr. Meyer. Within the case containing the picture, was a small heart cut in paper, on one side of which was written, *Je ne change qu'en mourant*; on the other, *Unalterable to my Perdita through life*.

Mrs. Robinson, who was an excellent judge of literary composition, speaking of this epistolary correspondence, says, 'there was a beautiful ingenuousness in his language, a warm and enthusiastic adoration expressed in every letter, which interested and charmed me.'

At length after many alternations of feeling, an interview with her royal lover was consented to by Mrs. Robinson, and proposed, by the management of Lord Malden, to take place at his Lordship's residence in Dean Street, May Fair. But the restricted situation of the Prince, controlled by a rigid governor, rendered this project of difficult execution. A visit to Buckingham House was then mentioned, to which Mrs. Robinson positively objected, as a rash attempt, abounding in peril to her august admirer. Lord Malden being again consulted, it was determined that the Prince should meet Mrs. Robinson for a few moments at Kew, on the banks of the Thames, opposite to the old palace, then the summer residence of the elder Princes. The account written by Mrs. Robinson, in a letter to a friend, of the lovers' meeting, is couched in elegant and flowing language and with much apparent ingenuousness. It deserves particular attention in another point of view, as it presents us with a more faithful portrait of the manners and accomplishments of the Prince of Wales at this period of his life, than is any where else to be met with. The date of this letter is in 1783.

'At length an evening was fixed for this long dreaded interview. Lord Malden and myself dined at the inn on the island, between Kew and Brentford. We waited the signal for crossing the river in a boat which had been engaged for the purpose.

Heaven can witness how many conflicts my agitated heart endured at this most important moment! I admired the Prince, I felt grateful for his affection. He was the most engaging of created beings. I had corresponded with him for many months, and his eloquent letters, the exquisite sensibility which breathed through every line, his ardent professions of adoration, had combined to shake my feeble resolution. The handkerchief was waved on the opposite shore, but the signal was, by the dusk of the evening, rendered almost imperceptible. Lord Malden took my hand, I stepped into the boat, and in a few minutes we landed before the iron gates of old Kew Palace. The interview was but of a moment. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, then Bishop of Osnaburg, were walking down the avenue. They hastened to meet us. A few words, and those scarcely articulate, were uttered by the Prince, when a noise of the people approaching from the palace startled us. The moon was now rising, and the idea of being overheard, or of his Royal Highness being seen out at so unusual an hour, terrified the whole group. After a few more words of the most affectionate nature uttered by the Prince, we parted, and Lord Malden and myself returned to the island. The Prince never quitted the avenue, nor the presence of the Duke of York, during the whole of this short meeting. Alas! my friend, if my mind was before influenced by esteem, it was now awakened by the most enthusiastic admiration. The rank of the Prince no longer chilled into awe that being who now considered him as the lover and the friend. The graces of his person—the irresistible sweetness of his smile, the tenderness of his melodious yet manly voice, will be remembered by me, till every vision of this changing scene shall be forgotten.’

It was at this period that his Royal Highness requested Mrs. Robinson to sit to a celebrated artist for her picture, a request which she complied with, although not without some reluctance. The Prince accordingly deputed Stroehling to execute the task; and he completed the beautiful painting from which the engraving in this work is taken. At the Prince’s particular desire, the doves were introduced into the picture in allusion to Florizel’s own words in the play,

So turtles pair
That never meant to part.

When the rupture between the lovers took place, and which is alleged to have taken place on the part of the Prince, on account of some alleged infidelity committed by the lady, the Prince would no longer allow the picture to adorn his cabinet, but made a present of it to one of his household, and in the course of time it has fallen into the possession of the publisher of this work.

‘Many and frequent were the interviews,’ continues Mrs. Robinson, ‘which afterwards took place at this romantic spot; our walks sometimes continued till past midnight; the Duke of York and Lord Malden were always of the party; our conversation was composed of general topics. The Prince had from his infancy been wholly secluded, and naturally took most pleasure in conversing about the busy world, its manners and pursuits, characters and scenery. Nothing could be more delightful or more rational than our midnight perambulations: I always wore a dark coloured habit, the rest of our party generally wrapped themselves up in great coats, to disguise themselves, excepting the Duke of York, who almost universally alarmed us by the display of a buff coat, the most conspicuous colour he could have selected for an adventure of this nature. The polished and fascinating ingenuousness of his Royal Highness’s manners contributed not a little to enliven our promenades. He sang with exquisite taste, and the tones of his voice breaking on the silence of the night, have often appeared to my entranced senses like more than mortal melody*.

‘Often have I lamented the distance which destiny had placed between us; how would my soul have idolized such a husband! Alas! how often, in the ardent enthusiasm of my soul, have I formed the wish that that being were *mine alone*, to whom partial millions were to look up for protection.

* These poetical flights would appear, perhaps, ornamental in Hubert de Sevrac, or any other romance, which the beautiful and highly-gifted Perdita may have written; but these songs of his Royal Highness are not in exact keeping with the extraordinary secrecy by which these nocturnal meetings appear to have been characterized. The royal lover was in momentary dread of a discovery, and a song by his Royal Highness, with, perhaps, a chorus by the whole strength of the company, was admirably calculated to bring certain individuals to the spot, who in a very few moments would have put an end to the harmony of the meeting. In this respect, we opine that the fancy of Mrs. Robinson had rather more to do in the representation than truth, but it is these inconsistencies, which, more than any other circumstances, throw a hue of discredit over the character of a narrative, which, in other respects, might be entitled to our unqualified belief of its authenticity.

‘The Duke of York was now on the eve of quitting the country for Hanover; the Prince was also on the point of receiving his first establishment, and the apprehension that his attachment to a married woman might injure his Royal Highness in the opinion of the world, rendered the caution which we invariably observed, of the utmost importance. A considerable time elapsed in these delightful scenes of visionary happiness: the Prince’s attachment seemed to increase daily, and I considered myself as the most blest of human beings. During some time we had enjoyed our meetings in the neighbourhood of Kew, and I now only looked forward to the adjusting of his Royal Highness’s establishment for the public avowal of our mutual attachment.’

Mrs. Robinson proceeds to relate that the daily prints now fostered the malice of her enemies, by the most scandalous paragraphs respecting the Prince of Wales and herself. ‘I now found it,’ she says, ‘too late to stop the hourly augmenting torrent of abuse which was poured on me from all quarters. Whenever I appeared in public, I was overwhelmed by the gazing of the multitude; I was frequently obliged to quit Ranelagh owing to the crowd which staring curiosity had assembled round my box, and even in the streets of the metropolis, I scarcely ventured to enter a shop, without experiencing the greatest inconvenience. Many hours have I waited till the crowd dispersed which surrounded my carriage, in expectation of my quitting the shop. I shuddered at the gulf before me, and felt small gratification in the knowledge of having taken a step, which many who condemned it would have been no less willing to imitate, had they been placed in the same situation.’

‘Previously to my first interview with his Royal Highness, in one of his letters I was astonished to find a bond of the most solemn and binding nature, containing a promise of the sum of 20,000*l.* to be paid at the period of his Royal Highness’s coming of age.’

‘This paper was signed by the Prince, and sealed with the royal arms; it was expressed in terms so liberal, so voluntary, so marked by true affection, that I had scarcely power to read it. My tears excited by the most agonizing conflicts obscured

the letters, and nearly blotted out those sentiments which will be impressed upon my mind till the latest period of my existence. Still I felt shocked and mortified at the indelicate idea of entering into any pecuniary engagements with a Prince, on whose establishment I relied for the enjoyment of all that would render life desirable. I was surprised at receiving it: the idea of interest had never entered my mind; secure of the possession of his heart, I had in that delightful certainty counted all my future treasure. I had refused many splendid gifts which his Royal Highness had proposed ordering for me at Gray's and other eminent jewellers. The Prince presented to me a few trifling ornaments, the whole in their value not exceeding one hundred guineas; even these, on our separation, I returned to his Royal Highness by the hands of General Lake.

‘The period now approached that was to destroy all the fairy visions which had filled my mind with dreams of happiness. At the moment when everything was preparing for his Royal Highness's establishment, when I looked impatiently for the arrival of that day, in which I might behold my adored friend gratefully receiving the acclamations of his future subjects, when I might enjoy the public protection of that being for whom I gave up all, I received a letter from his Royal Highness—a cold and unkind letter—briefly informing me, that we *must meet no more!*

‘And now I call Heaven to witness, that I was wholly unconscious why this decision had taken place in his Royal Highness's mind. Only two days previously to the letter being written, I had seen the Prince at Kew, and his affection appeared to be boundless as it was undiminished.

‘Amazed, afflicted beyond the power of utterance, I wrote immediately to his Royal Highness, requiring an explanation. He remained silent. Again I wrote, but received no elucidation of this most cruel and extraordinary mystery. The Prince was then at Windsor. I set out in a small pony phaeton, wretched, and unaccompanied by any one, excepting my postilion, a boy of nine years of age. It was dark when we quitted Hyde-Park corner. On my arrival at Hounslow, the inn-keeper informed me, that every carriage which had passed the

heath for the last ten nights, had been attacked and rifled. I confess the idea of personal danger had no terrors for my mind in the state it then was, and the probability of annihilation, divested of the crime of suicide, encouraged, rather than diminished, my determination of proceeding. We had scarcely reached the middle of the heath, when my horses were startled by the sudden appearance of a man, rushing from the side of the road. The boy, on perceiving him, instantly spurred his pony, and by a sudden bound of our light vehicle, the ruffian missed his grasp at the front rein. We now proceeded at full speed, while the footpad ran, endeavouring to overtake us. At length my horses fortunately outrunning the perseverance of the assailant, we reached the first Magpie, a small inn on the heath, in safety. The alarm, which, in spite of my resolution, this adventure had occasioned, was augmented on my recollecting, for the first time, that I had then in my black stock a brilliant stud, of very considerable value, which could only have been possessed by the robber by strangling the wearer.

‘ If my heart palpitated with joy at my escape from assassination, a circumstance soon after occurred that did not tend to quiet my emotions: this was the appearance of M. H. Meynel and Mrs. Armstead, afterwards the wife of Charles James Fox. My foreboding soul instantly saw a rival, and with jealous eagerness interpreted the hitherto inexplicable conduct of the Prince, from his having frequently expressed a wish to see that lady. On my arrival the Prince would not see me. My agonies were now indescribable: I consulted with Lord Malden and the Duke of Dorset, whose honourable mind and truly disinterested friendship for me, had on many occasions been exemplified towards me. They were both at a loss to divine any cause for this sudden change in the Prince’s feelings. The Prince of Wales had hitherto assiduously sought opportunities to distinguish me more publicly than was prudent in his Royal Highness’ situation. This was in the month of August. On the fourth of the preceding June, I went, by his desire, into the Chamberlain’s box, at the birth-night ball; the distressing observation of the circle was drawn towards the part of the box in which I sat, by the marked and injudicious attentions of his Royal Highness. I had not been seated many minutes, before

I witnessed a singular species of fashionable coquetry. Previously to his Royal Highness beginning the minuet, I perceived a lady of high rank select from the bouquet which she wore, two rose-buds, which she gave to the Prince, as he afterwards said to me, emblematical of herself and him. I observed his Royal Highness immediately beckon to a nobleman, who has since formed a part of his establishment, and looking most earnestly at me, whispered a few words, at the same time presenting to him his newly-acquired trophy. In a few minutes, Lord C. entered the Chamberlain's box, and giving the rose-buds into my hands, informed me that he was commissioned by the Prince to do so. I placed them in my bosom, and I confess I felt proud of the powers by which I had thus publicly mortified an exalted rival. His Royal Highness now avowedly distinguished me at all public places of entertainment, at the King's hunt near Windsor, at the reviews and the theatres. The Prince only seemed happy in evincing his affection towards me.'

Of the causes which led to the alienation of the affections of the Prince from his lovely and accomplished friend, Mrs. Robinson has not left in her Narrative any clue wherefrom to form a right judgment. 'My good-natured friends,' she proceeds, 'now carefully informed me of the multitude of secret enemies who were employed in estranging the Prince's mind from me. So fascinating, so illustrious a lover could not fail to excite the envy of my own sex. Women of all descriptions were emulous of attracting his Royal Highness' attention. Alas! I had neither rank nor power to oppose to such adversaries. Every engine of female malice was set in motion to destroy my repose, and every petty calumny was repeated with tenfold embellishments. Tales of the most infamous and glaring falsehood were invented, and I was again assailed by pamphlets, by paragraphs, and caricatures, and all the artillery of slander; while the only being to whom I then looked up for protection was so situated as to be unable to afford it.

'In the anguish of my soul I once more addressed the Prince of Wales; I complained perhaps too vehemently of his injustice, of the calumnies which had been by my enemies fabricated against me, of the falsehood of which he was but too sensible. I conjured him to render me justice, He did so;

he wrote me a most eloquent letter, disclaiming the causes alleged by a calumniating world, and fully acquitted me of the charges which had been propagated to destroy me.'

After some weeks passed in much wretchedness of mind, Mrs. Robinson had an interview with the Prince of Wales, which for a moment promised a renewal of their intercourse. As this interview was the last which took place between them with any view of reviving their connexion, we shall give the account of it in Mrs. Robinson's own words. 'After much hesitation,' says she, 'by the advice of Lord Malden I consented to meet his Royal Highness. He accosted me with every appearance of tender attachment, declaring that he had never for one moment ceased to love me, but that I had many concealed enemies, who were exerting every effort to undermine me. We passed some hours in the most friendly and delightful conversation, and I began to flatter myself that all our differences were adjusted. But what words can express my surprise and chagrin, when on meeting his Royal Highness *the very next day* in Hyde Park, he turned his head to avoid seeing me, and even affected not to know me?

'Overwhelmed by this blow, my distress knew no limits. Yet Heaven can witness the truth of my assertion—even in this moment of complete despair, when oppression bowed me to the earth, I blamed not the Prince. I did then, and ever shall consider his mind as nobly and honourably organized; nor could I teach myself to believe that a heart, the seat of so many virtues, could possibly become inhuman and unjust. I had been taught from my infancy to believe that elevated stations are surrounded by delusive visions which glitter but to dazzle, like an unsubstantial meteor, and flatter to betray.'

We shall only remark upon this narrative, that it bears on the face of it unquestionable marks of sincerity and genuineness. It is written with the freedom of friendship, and the language and sentiments are such as a person of a sensible and well cultivated mind, but of strong feelings, would in all probability use. It has, indeed, scarcely anything of the air of an apology. Mrs. Robinson candidly acknowledges that the manners, the accomplishments, the fascination of the heir-apparent completely seized upon her affections, and rendered her totally

unable to resist his Royal Highness' advances. To this it may be added, that to the latest period of her life, her attachment for the Prince continued unabated. When on her death bed, she requested that a lock of her hair might be presented to his Royal Highness; and this mark of her regard is said to have been received, on the part of the Prince, with strong demonstrations of sensibility—might we not also add, of compunction?

The beautiful poem which was published in the Annual Register, and entitled, by Mrs. Robinson, '*Lines to him who will understand them,*' evidently seem to have been composed at no very distant period from the date of her separation from the Prince. As these lines breathe a pensive spirit of tenderness, affection and regret, which no one but an amiable and accomplished object could have inspired, we shall offer no apology to our readers for presenting them with the following extract:—

Thou art no more my bosom friend,
Here must the sweet delusion end
That charmed my senses many a year,
Through smiling summers, winters drear.
Oh Friendship! am I doomed to find
Thou art a phantom of the mind—
A glittering shade, an empty name,
An air-born vision's vap'rish flame?
And yet the dear deceit so long
Has waked to joy my matin song,
Has bid my tears forget to flow,
Chased every pain, soothed every woe;
That truth, unwelcome to my ear,
Swells the deep sigh, recalls the tear;
Gives to the sense the keenest smart;
Checks the warm pulses of the heart;
Darkens my fate, and steals away
Each gleam of joy through life's sad way.
Britain, farewell!—I quit thy shore;
My native country charms no more;
No guide to mark the toilsome road;
No destin'd clime; no fix'd abode.
Alone and sad—ordained to trace
The vast expanse of endless space;

To view, upon the mountain's height,
Thro' varied shades of glimmering light,
The distant landscape fade away
In the last gleam of parting day ;
Or in the quiv'ring lucid stream
To watch the pale moon's silvery beam ;
Or when in sad and plaintive strains
The mournful Philomel complains,
In dulcet notes bewails her fate,
And murmurs for her absent mate,
Inspir'd by sympathy divine,
I'll weep her woes,—for they are mine.
Driven by Fate, where'er I go,
O'er burning plains, o'er hills of snow,
Or on the bosom of the wave
The howling tempest doom'd to brave,
Where'er my lonely course I bend
Thy image shall my steps attend ;
Each object I am doom'd to see
Shall bid rememb'rance picture thee.
Yes, I shall view thee in each flower
That changes with the transient hour ;
Thy wand'ring fancy I shall find
Borne on the wings of every wind ;
Thy wild impetuous passions trace
O'er the white wave's tempestuous space ;
In every changing season prove
An emblem of thy wav'ring love.

In dismissing this subject, replete with so much importance to the early character of the Prince of Wales, we cannot, consistently with that partiality which ought to distinguish an historian, wholly acquit his Royal Highness of a certain degree of unfeeling conduct towards an individual who had sacrificed her fame, her honour, and her person to the ardour of his passion, and on whose affection and kindness, considering her own amiable and endearing conduct, she undoubtedly possessed the highest claim. Notwithstanding Mrs. Robinson, in the fulness of a woman's love, makes every attempt to palliate the conduct of his Royal Highness, and to throw a veil over the harsh features of the latter part of it, yet it must be

apparent to every one that it cannot be justified on any principle of honour, feeling, or humanity. Still, however, it must be allowed that we see only the puppets, but not the secret machinery by which they are moved ; and, therefore, in common charity, we are bound to put the most favourable construction on the actions of those who are known not to be wholly independent, and who are obliged to act according to the power and control of others. In the generality of cases, the effect usually determines the presence or absence of any foreign interference ; but, in the present instance, there was no plea urged of any secret constraint—on the contrary, there was a studied and mysterious concealment of the motive—an obstinate and decided objection to enter into any explanation of the sudden change which had taken place in the sentiments of his Royal Highness towards the avowed object of his love ; the most chilling indifference succeeded almost instantaneously to the most ardent protestations of unalterable affection, and all without any other ostensible cause, than mere caprice. Justice, honour, and humanity, therefore, here step in, and denounce the action as contrary to every one of their acknowledged principles : she saw herself abandoned, deserted, and exposed to the contumely of a censorious and malicious world ; a helpless being, for the finger of scorn to point at—a victim to an ardent and ill-requited love. That love was to her a holy spot in the waste of her memory—it was the single theme of her thoughts, the idol of her dreams, and the separation was for ever.

It is evident that the calculation of Mrs. Robinson was founded in error, when she supposed, great and superlative as were her personal charms, and splendid as were her mental endowments, that she could enchain the affection of so fickle, so accomplished, and so illustrious a lover, surrounded as he was by the youthful beauties of his father's court, and roaming at large amongst the still perhaps greater beauties of the humbler ranks of life. Herein she failed, and everything must have conspired to tell her that her failure was inevitable. That a connexion of this kind could have been permanent, could scarcely have been expected by the most sanguine and enthusiastic spirit ; but the dark shade which envelops the cha-

racter of his Royal Highness, arises from the manner in which the once cherished object of his early love was discarded. She had sacrificed for him everything that was dear to woman—for him she bounded over the barrier which is considered the safeguard of female virtue; she clung to him with an affection which none but a woman's heart can feel. Self-interest was an idea too base and grovelling to hold dominion for a moment in a mind like hers; she lived but for him, and in him only was she happy. When her enemies assailed her (and that a woman, standing in the relation which she did with the heir-apparent should be without enemies, would indeed be a miracle in the history of human life)—when she became the object of the malicious wit of literary hirelings, and her name was coupled with the most noted Messalina of the day, did she shrink from an investigation of her conduct?—did she hide herself behind the veil of secrecy?—did she not appeal to her royal lover to disprove the charges of her enemies?—and did he not then unequivocally declare that he believed all those charges to be founded in malice and falsehood? It is, therefore, proved by his own declaration, that it was not any imputation which had been thrown on the character of Mrs. Robinson, which effected the change in the Prince of Wales' sentiments towards her; but his discarding of her partook of the character of the individual, who, having enjoyed the kernel, throws away the shell with indifference. Had he given any plea or excuse for his apparently unfeeling conduct; had he sheltered himself under the consciousness, which, to suit his purpose, might be supposed to have burst suddenly upon him, of the moral impropriety of the connexion, as standing in the exalted rank of the heir-apparent to the crown; the lovely sufferer, even then, would have felt the blow severely; but then, as a balsam to her wounded spirit, she would have had an apparently ostensible cause to support her for her loss, and she would have derived some consolation from the reflection, that it was not the decline nor the death of his affection which had estranged him from her, but that it was simply owing to the peculiarity of the circumstances under which her lover was placed. Had he adduced, as the cause of his estrangement, that the mandate of a parent had been issued to put an end to the connexion, or that, having

now attained his majority, and having entered as an exalted member into the great family compact of the nation, it behoved him, as the future ruler, to be circumspect and prudent in his conduct—a tear might have fallen at the destruction of her earthly hopes, and the memory of the blissful hours of their love would have hallowed the last moments of her existence. But the beautiful flower was thrown aside with the most callous indifference ; the spoiler had revelled in its sweets—he had satiated himself with its beauties—in the ardour of his love he took it to his bosom, blooming, fresh, full of life and bounding spirit : he threw it from him, broken, defoliated, faded, destroyed for ever.

We have looked in vain for one mitigating plea, for one redeeming reason, for the conduct of his Royal Highness ; and we sincerely wish, from that regard which we otherwise entertain for his general character, that some clue had been left us, by which the mystery in which his conduct towards Mrs. Robinson is involved, could have been satisfactorily solved. We enter not into the question of the morality of the connexion, nor do we attribute the termination of it to any conscientious scruples which might have arisen in the mind of the Prince of Wales, for his subsequent conduct contradicts that assumption ; but it is our desire to rescue his memory, as much as possible, from the imputations which at present rest upon it, of unfeeling and ungenerous conduct towards a lovely and confiding woman, who, but for his allurements, would have remained an ornament to her profession ; and who, perhaps, would have closed her earthly career with the exhilarating consciousness of having spent a life of virtue and decorum.

Notwithstanding, however, the moral turpitude of this connexion of the Prince with Mrs. Robinson, there were not wanting some who endeavoured to throw over it the veil of extenuation, and to represent it as attended with a very small degree of indecorum and impropriety : thus, one of the writers of that day says, ‘It was a case stained with no remarkable turpitude or gross departure from the moral laws of society. It was not a case of seduction ; and the person who, of all others, had the most right to complain, had released his wife from her vow by his own estrangement of conduct. Here, then, was

nothing very flagrant in this particular action of the Prince's life, yet it has been much dwelt upon by those who have made the abuse of the Prince of Wales (and such men there are) their livelihood. These ungenerous and unprincipled writers, who look into characters only for the purpose of finding faults, have stigmatized this transaction in the most virulent terms; and have inferred, from his attachment to a beautiful and amiable woman, an unbounded and promiscuous passion for the sex in general. This calumny, equally detestable and unfounded, has been propagated in a hundred ways; and, there is reason to apprehend, with too much success, for no one can be ignorant how much quicker scandal flies, and how much more tenaciously it is retained, than truth.

Discit enim citius, meminitque libentius illud

Quod quis deridet, quam quod probat, et veneratur.

‘The youth of the Prince, and the seductions to which his rank exposed him, never entered into the calculations of these writers. It is not for their purpose to seek out extenuating circumstances, but to magnify what are, at worst, mere levities or indiscretions, or the pardonable ebullitions of youth. By what analogy was it to be expected, that the generous blood of the heir-apparent was to be ice-bound, while that of every noble youth in the kingdom might run riot, and flow without reproach?’

The sophistry of these arguments, although very finely spun, is most easily detected; and it affords another proof of the injury which an over-zealous and officious friend may commit in the espousal of any cause, when he has not prudence nor ability to guide him through it. With all the facts staring him in the face, as related in the simple and candid narrative of Mrs. Robinson, the writer departs wholly from the truth; and, in order to save the honour of the Prince of Wales, ventures to pronounce, that it was not a case of seduction; from which he draws the inference, that the conduct of his Royal Highness was divested of all flagrancy. It will not, however, require great powers of reasoning to prove, that it was a case of the most studied, the most deliberate seduction. Previously to the moment when the charms of Mrs. Robinson captivated the affections of the royal youth, calumny had not dared to inflict a

single stain upon her character. A beautiful woman, neglected and deserted by her husband, is generally the object of the seductive arts of the libertine; and such being the case with Mrs. Robinson, we are able to assert, that her virtue had undergone and surmounted the severest of temptations. The very profession which she had chosen as the means of her support, and which may with justice be considered as the severest ordeal to which female virtue can be exposed, tended, whilst it made her the object of public admiration, to throw her into that very society where, if her disposition had been to fall, she would have found hundreds who would have been willing to accelerate, and to triumph in it. We have only to refer to the late Duke of Queensberry, and to another Duke, now living, almost as notorious as the former in the pages of gallantry, who used every instrument which rank or fortune could place in their hands to undermine the virtue of this lovely woman, but she remained firm, unconquerable; and when the latter nobleman sent her a *carte-blanche* to fix her own terms, she returned the memorable answer,—Poverty with virtue and happiness is preferable to affluence with guilt and misery*. But the evil hour came at last. On a sudden she beheld herself, in the most unexpected manner, the idolized object of one

* We are by no means ignorant, that at the time when the Prince of Wales was captivated with the charms of Mrs. Robinson, there were other suitors for her favours, amongst whom General Tarleton was considered as the most favoured. The following anecdote, however, deserves mention, as it shows the manner in which she treated some of those suitors, who wholly mistook her character, in considering, according to the prejudice of the day, that, as she was an actress, her favours were a marketable commodity, and to be purchased by the highest bidder. Amongst the most dashing rakes of the City at that time was Mr. Pugh, the son of Alderman Pugh, who had seen Mrs. Robinson in the character of Juliet, and becoming violently enamoured of her, he wrote to her, offering her twenty guineas *for ten minutes' conversation with her*. Mrs. Robinson immediately answered him, consenting to grant him the favour he asked, for the stipulated sum; and, elated with the prospect of the consummation of his wishes, Pugh repaired to the house of Mrs. Robinson at the appointed time. On his arrival, however, instead, as he expected, of being *closeted* with Mrs. Robinson, he was ushered into a room where he found that lady in company with General Tarleton and Lord Malden; and on his entrance, Mrs. Robinson detached her watch from her side, and laid it on the table. She then immediately turned from her former companions, and addressed her conversation wholly to Pugh, who, by the titter which sat upon the countenances of General Tarleton and Lord Malden, evidently saw that he was a complete dupe in the hands of his beautiful inamorata. Mrs. Robinson now took up the watch, the ten minutes were expired; she rose from her chair, rang the bell, and, on the servant entering, she desired him to open the door for Mr. Pugh, who, completely confounded, took his leave, minus twenty guineas, which, on the following day, were divided amongst four charitable institutions.

of the most handsome and accomplished youths in the kingdom, and that youth the heir-apparent to the crown. It were to betray a total ignorance of human nature, and particularly of the female character, if we were to assert, that the vanity of Mrs. Robinson was not flattered in beholding herself the chosen object of the affections of the Prince of Wales, for which many a bosom was sighing in vain, and to attain which, every snare and net were laid which love or passion could devise. Agents, young in years, though skilled in intrigue, and in the conquest of female virtue, were immediately set to work; and to the indelible disgrace of one of those agents be it recorded, that he condescended to the commission of acts, worthy only of the most unprincipled pander. This man—for we will not affix the epithet of noble before that word, on the principle, that every nobleman is not a noble man—so far degraded himself, as, on the first night of the assignation of the Prince with Mrs. Robinson, to carouse with her husband, and to leave him in such a state of complete intoxication as to divest the parties of all fear of any intrusion on his part; for although living almost in a state of separation from his wife, he was in the habit of continually annoying her, especially when he thought that she had received any part of her salary from the theatre. The very difficulty, however, which the Prince experienced in obtaining the consummation of his wishes, showed that the virtue of Mrs. Robinson was of no ordinary strength. The fruit which he had hitherto enjoyed had fallen from the bough at the first shake; and the unexpected obstacles, therefore, which now presented themselves, only tended to increase the keenness of his appetite. Every art and stratagem, which the most finished seducer, assisted by the most experienced agents could suggest, were adopted. Assignation after assignation was held, and chiefly at the Eel-pie House: the Prince leaving Kew Palace in various disguises, and on one occasion he scaled the walls of the garden disguised as a watchman.

Months after months, however, elapsed, and still the citadel held out—the struggle was great—it was agonizing; it was a contest which, to the honour and character of the assailed party be it said, that few in her situation would have maintained so long—the victory at last was won; and if female seduction

be attended with flagrancy, the conduct of his Royal Highness cannot, in this instance, stand absolved from it. He knew Mrs. Robinson to be a married woman, and the mother of a daughter—the seduction of her, therefore, stamped him with the character of the adulterer; and when we are told by the advocates of his Royal Highness that the conduct of her husband released her from the obligations of her marriage vow, we cannot find words sufficiently energetic to express our disapprobation at the danger and immoral tendency of such a doctrine. Mr. Robinson was certainly a bad and profligate husband; but it is breaking one of the most important links in the chain of human society, to allege that the profligacy of the husband authorizes any profligacy on the part of the wife: much less can it, in the least degree, extenuate her infidelity. We have been purposely diffuse on this subject, as we wish to place all the characters who came into immediate personal contact with the illustrious individual, who has lately exchanged his earthly crown for one, we sincerely hope and trust, of greater glory, in their true, natural, and unvarnished light: where guilt really presents itself, there let it be fearlessly exposed—let the burden of iniquity be borne on the right shoulders; and never let it be repeated, that, in order to screen the vices or profligacies of the prince or the monarch, we servilely threw an unmerited obloquy on the character of those, who are no longer in this world to exonerate themselves from the imputations which are cast upon them.

On the whole, this may be considered as the history of a transaction, which created suspicions which must ever be deplored, and feelings of dissatisfaction which were never afterwards entirely obliterated. The advocates of his Royal Highness, indeed, contended that the connexion was improper—that Mrs. Robinson was a married woman and an actress—that the Prince was but a young man—that it would have been improper, and indeed criminal, to have perpetuated the intercourse—and that the only possible way to avoid the evils which the connexion would entail on him, was ‘to get rid of her at once.’ But to such defence it was replied, that the Prince had *sought*, flattered, caressed, and won the heart of Mrs. Robinson; that for more than two years the intimacy had sub-

sisted between them; that there was no pretence now for breaking off the connexion, especially as others were forming; that it displayed a wavering and vacillating disposition and affections, inconsistent alike with a great mind and a generous heart; and, principally, that even if the action were in itself correct, the *manner* in which it was performed was alone sufficient to indicate a total absence of sensibility, and all the finer feelings of the heart. On such conflicting conclusions it is here unnecessary to offer any opinion. The facts, unvarnished, have been presented by Mrs. Robinson, and the present and succeeding generations will draw their own conclusions.

In one particular, however, Mrs. Robinson has forgotten to do that justice to the character of his Royal Highness which it deserves, and which goes, in some measure, to show, that in her connexion with the Prince, she was not wholly exempt from selfish motives. It is true that she sent him back his bond; but, nevertheless, on her leaving the country, she threatened to enforce the penalty of it, although, in some respects, it could not be considered as much more than a bit of waste paper. The business was ultimately left to the arbitration of Mr. Fox, who, for particular reasons, which rather tarnish than exalt his character, used his utmost endeavours to promote the expatriation of Mrs. Robinson. A handsome annuity was finally settled on her, and also to extend to the life of her only daughter by Mr. Robinson.

That the affection of this lovely woman for the Prince was not of a transient, fickle nature, but that it was interwoven with the closest fibres of her heart, may be gathered from the circumstance that, on her death-bed, she requested that a lock of her hair might be presented to his Royal Highness; and the last mark of her regard, this indisputable proof, that he still lived, even in death, the object of her love, was, it is said, received by the Prince with strong feelings of solicitude and care. We envy him not his feelings when he received it.

We now find the Prince of Wales running the range of the Opera-house—the idol of the women—the envy of the men. To fix him, however, long in his attachments, appeared to be in direct variance with his nature; and there were many who had no sooner flattered themselves that they held him fast in

their chains, than, to their great mortification, he snapped them suddenly asunder, and appeared as if he had never felt their pressure. This was particularly the case with Carnovalla, whose husband originally belonged to the orchestra, and who, subsequently, by the interest of the Prince of Wales, became manager of the Opera-house. This lady, although not a beauty of the first order, was in her manners one of those fascinating women who often, in the absence of any great personal charms, establish an unbounded influence over the heart of man; and it was to this power of fascination that Carnovalla owed the dominion which she held for a short time over the affections of the Prince of Wales. It must not, however, be concealed, that this connexion, from reasons the mention of which must be omitted, was one of the most disreputable which the Prince of Wales ever formed; and when the husband of the lady afterwards turned out to be an incendiary, by setting fire to the Opera-house, a considerable share of the opprobrium fell upon his Royal Highness, in having been the instrument of obtaining for so bad a character, the management of the concern.

The period was now approaching when the Prince of Wales was to be emancipated from parental control, and to take that station in society to which his illustrious rank entitled him. In the month of June, 1783, Lord John Cavendish, who then filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, presented the following Message from his Majesty to the House of Commons.

‘GEORGE R.

His Majesty, reflecting on the propriety of a separate establishment for his dearly-beloved son, the Prince of Wales, recommends the consideration thereof to this House, relying on the experienced zeal and affection of his faithful Commons for such aid towards making that establishment as shall appear consistent with a due attention to the circumstances of his people, every addition to whose burthens his Majesty feels with the most sensible concern.

G. R.’

On the message being taken into consideration, it was determined that his Royal Highness should be allowed the sum of

50,000*l.* a-year, and that the sum of 60,000*l.* should be granted to him for the purpose of forming an establishment. The income of 50,000*l.* a-year was so inferior to the sums granted to former Princes of Wales, that its disproportion could not fail to strike very forcibly. George II., when Prince of Wales, had enjoyed an income of 100,000*l.* per annum, and the same allowance had been granted to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and to George III. when Prince of Wales, during the short period that elapsed from his coming of age to his accession to the throne. It was argued, therefore, by those who wished to see a more liberal provision made for his Royal Highness, both on account of his illustrious rank and of his various and shining virtues, that as his royal predecessors had enjoyed larger revenues at periods when the necessities of life were much cheaper, it was treating the Prince with ill-judged and unmerited parsimony to place him in a worse situation than former Princes of Wales had been placed in; and there were not wanting some who, at this time, actually prognosticated the inconvenience and embarrassments which at a future period would arise to his Royal Highness from the scantiness of his income. Amongst this number was Mr. Fox, who then filled the post of secretary of state for the foreign department. He foresaw that habits of strict economy could not be expected of so young a man as the Prince of Wales, surrounded as he was and exposed to all the allurements, which can captivate the youthful passions, and that the narrowness of his income, instead of being any advantage to the nation, might throw him into a state of embarrassment from which the country might be called upon to relieve him. Had it remained with Mr. Fox, he certainly would have advised an establishment more adequate to the object in view; but the person most proper to decide on the business was of a very different opinion, and therefore it was his duty to submit.

The person to whom we allude was the King himself, who was unwilling, at the close of a disastrous and expensive war, when economy in every branch of the public expenditure was loudly called for by all ranks of his subjects, to increase the expenses of the state by a larger establishment for the Prince of Wales. His Majesty, therefore, suggested to confine his

Royal Highness' income to a grant of 50,000*l.* a-year, exclusive of the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall, which on an average amounted to 13,000*l.* a-year. In the same month he obtained his Colonelcy of the 10th Light Dragoons, which he retained until he ascended the throne. This was the only military rank the King would ever allow him to hold.

The Prince had now begun to manifest that predilection for Brighton which induced him at a future period to make that town his residence. The report, however, which was current at the time, and which is actually founded in truth, goes so far as to state, that it was neither the marine views, nor the benefit of change of air, nor the salubrity of the place, which possessed in the eyes of his Royal Highness at this time any great attractions, but that he was drawn thither by the angelic figure of a sea-nymph, whom he one day encountered reclining on one of the groins on the beach. In this amour, however, his Royal Highness was completely the dupe. As far as personal charms extended, Charlotte Fortescue was of 'the first order of fine forms,' but as far as mental qualifications were to be considered, she was one of the most illiterate and ignorant of human beings. In artifice and intrigue she was unparalleled, and withal she knew how to throw such an air of simplicity and innocence over her actions as would have deceived even a greater adept than his Royal Highness in the real nature of her character. She soon discovered the exalted station of the individual whom she believed she had captivated by her charms; and on the principle that the thing is of little value, which is cheaply or easily obtained, she for a time frustrated every attempt of his Royal Highness to obtain a private interview with her. She kept her residence a complete secret, and for some days she was neither seen nor heard of. On a sudden she would make her appearance, and then, suffused in tears, would speak of her approaching marriage, and her consequent departure from the country; and could that idea be borne by her royal lover? Heaven and earth were to be moved to avert such a direful calamity; a regular elopement was proposed, and in order to give the affair a highly romantic air, it was arranged that the dress of a footman was to be procured for the beautiful fugitive, and that the Prince was to have a postchaise in waiting a few miles on

the London road to bear away his valuable prize. There is, however, an old adage which says, that much falls between the cup and the lip, and in this instance the truth of it was fully confirmed. The hour was anxiously looked for which was to bring the lovers into the undisturbed society of each other; but as the Prince was dressing for dinner, the arrival of George Hanger, who had just then begun his career of eccentricity and profligacy in the fashionable circles, was announced. The Prince invited him to dine, excusing himself, however, at the same time for the early hour in which he would be obliged to leave him, as he had most important business to transact that night in the metropolis. Dinner being over, the Prince inquired the business which had brought his visiter to Brighton in so unexpected a manner.

‘A hunt, a hunt, your Royal Highness,’ said Hanger, ‘I am in chase of a d——d fine girl, whom I met with at Mrs. Simpson’s, in Duke’s Place; and although I have taken private apartments for her in St. Ann’s East, yet the hussy takes it in her head every now and then to absent herself for a few days; and I have now been given to understand that she is carrying on some intrigue with *a fellow* at this place. Let me but catch him, and I will souse him over head and ears in the ocean.’

The Prince now inquired what kind of a lady he was in pursuit of, and by the description given he doubted not for a moment that the lady with whom he was to elope that very evening on account of her approaching marriage, was the identical lady who had eloped from the protection of his visiter, and he began to consider how he could extricate himself with the best possible grace from the dilemma in which he was involved. That he was a dupe to the artifices of a cunning, designing girl was now apparent to him, and therefore it would be his greatest pride and joy to outwit her. He, therefore, disclosed the whole of his intrigue with the runaway, and it was resolved that Hanger should put on one of the coats in which she had been accustomed to see her royal lover, and take his seat in the chaise, instead of the Prince. The whole affair was well managed; the Prince remained at Brighton. Hanger bore off his lady to London, not a little chagrined at

such an unexpected termination of her romantic elopement ; but not many months elapsed before the lady gained an opportunity of repaying the Prince tenfold for the trick which he had played her.

The manner in which his Royal Highness travelled at this time to and from Brighton partook a good deal of the eccentric. He had always three horses to his phaeton, one before the other, like a team in a wagon ; the first horse was ridden by a postilion, the other two were managed by himself. The vehicle was built upon an entirely new construction, and particularly adapted for expedition.

In regard to the state of the pecuniary affairs of the Prince at this time, the truth began to display itself, that the fixing of the Prince's establishment at 50,000*l.* per annum did not evince much foresight on the part of the King. It was said to have been dictated by a maxim, that to keep princes out of vice they should be kept poor, than which nothing ever proved more erroneous. The allowance to the Prince was exactly one half of what had been allowed to his grandfather, when money was of much greater value ; and was of course insufficient for the support of the royal establishment. This, encouraged by his natural spirit of extravagance, occasioned him to contract debts, and when it became necessary that those debts should be discharged, very little care was shown to protect the Prince's character from disgrace. There was another circumstance also which ought not to be overlooked : the Duchy of Cornwall was the Prince's property from the hour of his birth, and when he came of age he was put in possession of the revenues of that Duchy, but the Prince obtained no part of that revenue which had been received from the Duchy during the minority. Part of the sum so unjustly withheld from him was afterwards repaid, but this did little towards appeasing his sense of the wrong.

We shall defer any further remarks on this subject until the period when it was brought before parliament by the friends of the Prince, a circumstance which tended considerably to enlarge the breach between the latter and his royal parent.

SECTION II.

[From 1780 to 1790.]

It cannot be denied that party spirit is the moving spring in the government of this country. Where freedom exists with so much latitude, unceasing contentions for the enjoyment of power will naturally arise, from the personal ambition and private interests of men. It has been alleged that a British prince should divest himself of all party spirit, and that he should adhere to those men only who act up to the principles of the constitution, and whose conduct has been stamped with national approbation. We are now entering on that period of the Prince's life when he became a member in the great council of the nation, and consequently the choice of his associates determined his political bias, and his adherence or opposition to the measures of the acting ministers of the day.

On the 12th of August, 1783, the Prince of Wales attained his majority; the celebration of it, however, was postponed at court in consequence of the accouchement of the Queen of her fifteenth child, which took place on the 7th of the same month. The King and royal family, therefore, received the congratulations of the nobility in a private manner, and his Royal Highness gave a very grand entertainment to several of the nobility, at the White Hart Tavern, Windsor; a large turtle, of the enormous size of four hundred weight, was killed on the occasion, being a present sent to the Prince from the East Indies.

The first establishment of the Prince was a welcome event to his numerous flatterers, especially to some amongst them whose profligacy and poverty seemed to vie with each other which should the soonest complete his ruin. Deeply did every *real* friend of his Royal Highness lament, that, of this pernicious class, some had obtained an entire ascendancy over his ingenuous mind; and, that whilst they hailed his independence with hollow congratulations, they dreaded nothing so much as for his spirit to become as independent as his circumstances, and his opinions to disdain the restraint which his person had

shaken off. They were, in fact, resolved that neither persons nor circumstances should long continue independent of their control; hence arose that course of extravagant folly to which they urged him, and which, in a very short time, compelled the King and Parliament to interfere for his relief.

At the opening of Parliament, on the 11th of November, 1783, his Royal Highness was introduced into the House of Peers, on which occasion the following ceremonial was observed, as inserted in the *London Gazette*.

His Royal Highness having been, by letters patent, dated the 19th day of August, in the second year of his Majesty's reign, created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, was, in his robes, which, with the collar and order of the Garter he had put on in the Marshal's house, introduced into the House of Peers in the following order:—

Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, with his Staff of Office,
Earl of Surrey, Deputy Earl-Marshal of England,
Lord Privy Seal,

Garter Principal King of Arms, in his robes, with the Sceptre,
bearing his Royal Highness' Patent,

Sir Peter Burrell, Deputy Great Chamberlain of England,
Viscount Stormont,

Lord President of the Council,
The Coronet

On a crimson velvet cushion, borne by Viscount Lewisham, one
of the Gentlemen of his Royal Highness' Bed-chamber,

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES,
carrying his writ of summons, supported by his uncle the Duke
of Cumberland, and the Dukes of Richmond and Portland.

And, proceeding up the House with the usual reverences, the writ and patent were delivered to the Earl of Mansfield, Speaker, on the woolsack, and read by the Clerk of the Parliament at the table, his Royal Highness and the rest of the procession standing near; after which, his Royal Highness was conducted to his chair on the right hand of the throne, the coronet and cushion having been laid on a stool before the chair, and his Royal Highness being covered as usual, the ceremony ended.

Some time after his Majesty entered the House of Peers,

and was seated on the throne with the usual solemnities, and having delivered his most gracious speech, retired out of the House.

Then his Royal Highness, at the table, took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and made and subscribed the declaration, and also took and subscribed the oath of abjuration.

The session in which the Prince of Wales now took his seat in the great council of the nation was one of the most important that had occurred since his Majesty's accession to the throne, though, at this period, its importance is lost in the magnitude of succeeding events. The Coalition ministry, with the Duke of Portland at its head, (but with Mr. Fox the efficient minister,) was then at the zenith of its power, and menaced the royal authority with some restrictions of prerogative, which are supposed to have given high offence to the interior cabinet of Buckingham House. We allude to the celebrated India Bill of Mr. Fox, which was introduced in this session, and caused the dismissal of the Coalition administration.

The first time his Royal Highness ever spoke in Parliament was upon the motion of the Marquess of Abercorn, for an amendment to the address of the Commons upon his Majesty's proclamation for preventing seditious meetings and writings, and in a manly, eloquent, and it may be added, persuasive manner, delivered his sentiments. He said, that on a question of such magnitude, he should be deficient in his duty as a member of Parliament, unmindful of the respect he owed to the constitution, and inattentive to the welfare, the peace, and happiness of the people, if he did not state to the world what was his opinion on the present question. He was educated in the principles, and he should ever preserve them, of a reverence for the constitutional liberties of the people; and, as on those constitutional principles the happiness of that people depended, he was determined, as far as his interest could have any force, to support them. The matter in issue was, in fact, whether the constitution was or was not to be maintained; whether the wild ideas of theory were to conquer the wholesome maxims of established practice; and whether those laws under which we had flourished for such a series of years were to be subverted by a reform unsanctioned by the people. As

a person nearly and dearly interested in the welfare, and he should emphatically add, the happiness and comfort of the people, it would be treason to the principles of his mind if he did not come forward and declare his disapprobation of those seditious publications which had occasioned the motion now before their Lordships; his interest was connected with that of the people; they were so inseparable, that unless both parties concurred, happiness could not exist. On this great, this solid basis, he grounded the vote which he meant to give, and that vote should unequivocally be for a concurrence with the Commons in the address they had resolved upon.

His Royal Highness spoke in a manner that called not only for the attention, but the admiration of the House, and the following words were remarkably energetic. 'I exist by the love, the friendship, and the benevolence of the people, and their cause I will never forsake as long as I live.' The Prince then concluded by distinctly saying: 'I give my most hearty assent to the motion for concurring in this wise and salutary address.'

In the discussions which took place in the Upper House of Parliament relative to the India Bill, the Prince of Wales observed a dignified neutrality, but it was generally understood that the Whig party, with Mr. Fox at their head, possessed his good wishes. Being now launched into public life, some judgment may be formed of what were his political principles from the circle with whom he associated; and in speaking of the character of the men who at this time formed what was called the Prince's friends, if we should appear to speak of his Royal Highness in a tone of regret or disapprobation, it proceeds not from any disrespect which we entertain of his general character, or from the most distant intention of degrading his late Majesty in the opinion of the English people. Nevertheless, with that sincere attachment which is due from every subject of the British Empire to the heir apparent of the crown, it must cause a certain degree of distress in the mind of every reflecting Englishman, when he beholds such shining virtues perverted from their natural tendency to whatever is great and good.

The Prince of Wales is not only the offspring of the sovereign, but he is the child of the people. The nation has a dear and heartfelt interest in him, and every individual of the country over which he is one day destined to govern possesses a constitutional right to observe upon his conduct, and to applaud or to lament it.

The virtues of the Prince of Wales were many, and of the most engaging nature. They were his own, and it would be ungracious not to give him the full merit of them; but on the other hand, if any errors should be found to mingle with his amiable qualities, it would be an act of equal injustice not to attribute them to the acts of designing men, who availed themselves of his generous nature, to win his confidential regard, with the view to apply it, if possible, to their own private as well as political interests.

When his Royal Highness arrived at that period which emancipated him from the control of the Queen's palace; when all that could give pleasure, flatter vanity, and gratify passion, was at his command; when impelled by the vivacity of early life and warmed by the glow of a generous mind, he entered into the world as into a bower of delight, it becomes by no means a matter of surprise, that the policy of certain men should actuate them to assume any and every form that might conciliate his favourable prepossessions, and hiding their serpent train in flowers, present themselves to his view in such a fascinating shape, and clothed with such attractions as might appear to justify his warmest friendship. This, indeed, was a moment when severity itself knew not how to censure him for preferring the Epicurean to the Stoic philosophy.

It is not by any means improbable that, in his unreserved and social hours, he now heard arguments insidiously suggested to support every branch and refinement of elegant intemperance. It might now be progressively insinuated to him, that Princes were elevated at too great a distance from the common herd of mankind to obtain a proper knowledge of them, and that to live as a subject was the best preparation to fulfil the duties of a king; that to know the world it was necessary to mix in all the concerns of it; that to indulge in what are called the vices of youth and fashionable life, was a

proof of genuine spirit, and to give grace to his mode of enjoying them, was a mark of superior genius ; that dignity was a grave and solemn quality which suited ill with youth ; that it was one of the formal accompaniments of advanced life, and should be laid aside till the possession of sovereign power required the solemn exercise of it : in short, that as the only period of enjoyment allotted to the heir of an empire was the uncertain space of time between the trammels of education and the cares of a crown, he was certainly more than justified in crowding into it all the pleasure it is capable of containing.

Such doctrines might at this time have been propagated to encourage the glowing dispositions of his age, while the crafty philosophers who taught them knew how to apply their principles to every object of luxurious and sensual gratification. It must also be premised, that with the dispositions which the Prince of Wales possessed, and the partialities which he had formed, it could not be expected that a rigid prudence was to be found amongst the most conspicuous of his virtues, or that he would submit to the plague of economical attention ; and such was in reality the case : he indulged himself in a profuse liberality, a splendour of appearance, and a variety of pleasures beyond the power of his revenue to support.

The people whom his Royal Highness chose for his social friends, soon contrived, also, to involve him in their political principles. It was the natural consequence of the society he had adopted. He was even persuaded to attend the debates of the House of Commons, as the great school of political instruction, and he appeared to reserve his approving looks for the orators of opposition. Still, however, he preserved the decorum of respectful intercourse with his royal parent, and Mr. Fox, in a parliamentary eulogium of him, represented it, with his usual ability, as a very promising feature in his character, that he knew how to reconcile an opposition to his father's ministers with filial duty.

It is, however, a notorious fact, that the men who at this time styled themselves the opposition were the original cause of the pecuniary embarrassments of his Royal Highness. Their example, their suggestions, their prodigalities, progressively seduced him from the moral standard before he had acquired

any knowledge of human artifice, and, in the moment of that seduction, they meanly and ruinously fattened upon his exceeding bounty; yet no sooner were those means of improvident support withheld, than they blotted all recollection of his munificence from their memories, and had the audacity to affect a pity for his diminished splendour, and publicly blamed him for having suffered himself to be their dupe and sacrifice. They rudely cast him upon an indiscriminating society, encumbered in a great degree with a weight of responsibility for their own irregularities; they shaded his perception, but could not suppress the arguments of his heart.

Amongst the earliest friends of the Prince of Wales, Fox, Sheridan, and Burke may be considered as the most distinguished, a triumvirate of talent and genius, which we can scarcely expect ever to behold again. In the formation of his establishment, the Prince consulted Mr. Fox, and it is undoubted, that he entertained for him the most sincere regard. With Mr. Fox, therefore, he thenceforth formed a permanent friendship. Influenced by his eloquence and impressed by his arguments and persuasion, he regarded that illustrious statesman as a pattern for his imitation, and esteemed and revered him as the friend of man. Into the amusements and follies of the lighter hours of Mr. Fox, the Prince entered with a zest which his previous restrictions tended to increase, and these follies and extravagancies not unfrequently involved him in private broils, which exposed him to public animadversion.

Mr. Fox, then in the prime of life, though not of his glory, stood on a commanding eminence, and the eyes not only of his own nation, but of all the courts of Europe, were turned upon him, as the man above all others in the British dominions best qualified to be at the head of the government. But his bold independent spirit; the firmness with which he resisted the encroachments of the crown, and above all, his sincere and unalterable attachment to the privileges of the people, were insurmountable objections to his reception at court. The King, educated in high Tory maxims, was averse to his principles and dreaded his spirit; the favourites of the court were naturally disgusted with his integrity, and shrunk beneath his superior talents. In his parliamentary conduct

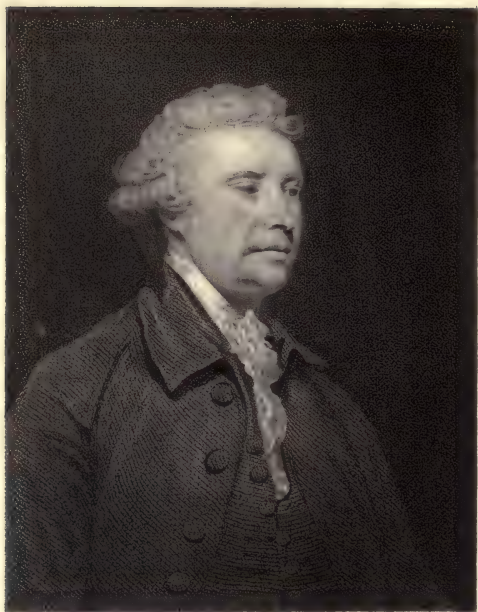
there was nothing to censure, and as a minister he had shewn himself incapable of being influenced by the seductions of office, or tempted by the love of power, to continue in place when the dictates of honour and conscience told him that he ought to resign.

In the public life, therefore, of this illustrious man, there was nothing that the most implacable of his enemies could fix upon that rendered him unfit to occupy the first place in the confidence of the heir-apparent to the crown; and, therefore, in order to justify the obloquy which was cast upon the Prince of Wales for this attachment, it was necessary that the private character of Mr. Fox should undergo an examination, and the amusements and follies of his lighter hours were made to pass in a severe and malignant review before the public judgment. And here it must be confessed that his enemies had some tangible grounds to proceed upon, for it is indisputable that he was guilty of many of the levities and indiscretions which young men of fashion and fortune commit; and that, like them, he experienced those pecuniary vicissitudes which generally indicate extravagance and imprudence. Into these follies and indiscretions the Prince of Wales unfortunately entered, and not possessing at that period that hold on the public opinion which the parliamentary exertions of Mr. Fox had ensured to him, he participated in all the disgrace incidental to such conduct, without enjoying the counteracting influence of public esteem.

A finer compliment to the genius of this celebrated man was never paid than by the late erudite philosopher, Dr. Parr. Speaking of the friends and companions of that glorious time, which boasted so many wits and geniuses now no more, he said that he never feared Dr. Johnson in argument, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, nor even Edmund Burke. 'The only man I feared,' he added, 'was Charles James Fox! When *he* argued, I felt my inferiority.'

It is our wish, from the sincere reverence which we feel for the extraordinary talents of this great man, that we could wholly acquit him of some acts which partake strongly of dishonour, and a wanton neglect of those upright principles on which the genuine moral character is founded. We are aware





EDMUND BURKE.

Edm Burke

Engraved by W. Basse from a Painting by Sir J. Reynolds
London. Published by Thomas Kelly W. Strand near Row 1820.

that these sentiments are at direct variance with those expressed by a very able writer when treating of the *private* character of Mr. Fox, who says, 'take the word honour in whatever acceptance it can be applied, it will, from the narrowest scrutiny that can possibly be gone into Mr. Fox's life, be found, that he never, even in the remotest degree, violated the strictest laws of honour.' We pledge ourselves, in the course of this work, that in his relations with the Prince of Wales we will disprove that statement in many important particulars, and under circumstances which can throw no palliative hue over the conduct which he pursued.

The person who was supposed at this time to hold a second place in the friendship of the Prince of Wales as a political man, was Mr. Burke. Of the character of this great orator we are not to judge from the maxims of his later years, but from the principles which he asserted up to the period when he was distinguished by the friendship of his Royal Highness. Brought into public notice by the munificence of the Marquess of Rockingham, and attached to the Whig party both by sentiment and gratitude, the splendour of his eloquence, and his various literary attainments, had raised him to a high rank both in the political and literary world. The conduct of Mr. Burke, in his declining years, casts a shade over his character; but we are disposed rather to view this luminary as he shone in the political hemisphere at the meridian of his glory, than in his declension, when the evening and the lowering tempests of night obscured and deformed his setting rays.

Mr. Burke was, on many accounts, one of the most remarkable men of his times. He was what few of our modern statesmen have been—the architect of his own preferment, without ever having had occasion to blush for the means which brought him forward to public notice. Born with a vast and comprehensive genius, which he cultivated with the most assiduous industry, he rose to eminence by his own talents; and the patronage that was conferred on him reflected as much honour on the discernment of his Royal Highness as his own abilities reflected credit on himself. It is not easy to pronounce the eulogy of such a man; not because we find it difficult to separate those parts of his public conduct which we disap-

prove from those which we admire—and, indeed, we may say, as proceeding from such a mind as Mr. Burke's, which we reverence,—but because so many great qualities were united in Mr. Burke's composition, that it is next to impossible to give a rough sketch of the combined effect of the whole.

In one particular, however, we will do that justice to the character of Mr. Burke, which it so preeminently deserves, by declaring that he neither encouraged nor fostered the libertine dispositions of the illustrious individual who honoured him with his friendship and esteem. In many instances he attempted to dissuade him from pursuing a career which must ultimately end in disgrace and ruin, and to which it was evident that he was led on by the example of his profligate companions, reckless, as it would appear, of the consequences resulting to the injury of his character as a prince and a man. Circumstanced, however, as Mr. Burke was, and in conformity with the principle of *noscitur a sociis*, it was impossible for him to escape coming in for a share of the general obloquy which was at this time attached to the associates of the Prince, who were regarded, in the majority, as a set of men with bankrupt fortunes, who administered to his wanton appetites merely for the purpose of their own aggrandizement.

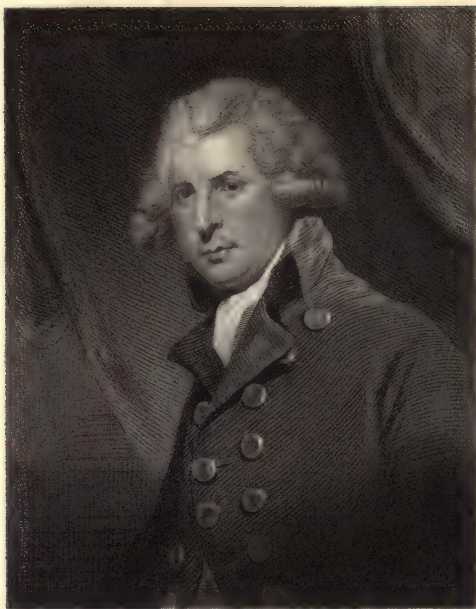
Looking, however, at Mr. Burke merely as a public man, and as one of the most distinguished leaders of the House of Commons, we can affirm of him, without the least fear of contradiction, that the universality of his knowledge and erudition, the powers of his imagination, the rapidity of his eloquence, the perfection of his language, and the various objects to which those endowments were applied, all conspired to make him one of the most prominent and conspicuous characters of his time. It may perhaps be considered by some as a misfortune in the world that the extraordinary genius of this man, whose private studies might have so greatly delighted and instructed it, should have been thrown into the tumult of public life, and absorbed in the vortex of politics. But let us take a passing glance at the various and astonishing qualities of his oratorical powers, before we too rashly condemn the destiny which conducted Mr. Burke to the triumphs of the senate-house.

The argumentative powers of Mr. Burke were of the highest order; his sources of knowledge were universal and inexhaustible; his memory was comprehensive and faithful, while his mind teemed with the most luxuriant imagery, clothed in the most elegant language, and strengthened by the most applicable and brilliant expressions. It has been admitted, even by those who have most rigidly examined his pretensions to fame, that the splendour of his eloquence has seldom been excelled by the most accomplished orators or even poets of any age or country. From the depths of science, from the labours of art, the long track of history, the flights of poetry, 'the passing moment,' as well as that which is gone for ever, he collected, or rather commanded the most apt, varied, and beautiful imagery to support and decorate his elocution; and such was the extent of his powers and the facility with which he could muster up his forces, that in the very tumult of his eloquence, they presented themselves to his mind, to aid, to strengthen, and to carry the cause he supported. The harmony of his periods, and the accuracy of his expressions, even in his most unpremeditated speeches, were among the least of the oratorical distinctions of this wonderful man. In the most rapid of his flights, when the torrent of his eloquence could scarcely keep pace with his thoughts, and the hearer with difficulty attend him in his course, he never failed to seize the most choice and felicitous expressions that are to be found in the treasury of our language. His mind was an emporium of knowledge, and the communication of his stores was elegant, graceful, and attractive. In the House of Commons, his details were interesting, important, and correct—his arguments forcible, replete with information, and never supported by designed misrepresentation to answer the purposes of debate. His knowledge of parliamentary business was so vast and multifarious, that every matter brought into discussion, whether politics, jurisprudence, finance, commerce, manufactures, or internal police, with all their divisions, subdivisions, and ramifications, were treated by him in such a manner, as to induce those who heard him to imagine that he had dedicated his life to the investigation of that particular subject. In conclusion of this brief sketch of this extraordinary man, it would be in-

justice to pass over his occasional displays of the most pure morals, or to omit the acknowledgment that his speeches seldom failed to possess a strong tincture of the most amiable philosophy.

Sheridan, the wit, the poet, the dramatist, and the orator, but the drunkard, the gamester, and the rake, was also the personal friend of the Prince of Wales. To the talents of Sheridan as an orator, the tributes of admiration and applause have been as numerous as they have been just. Of one of his celebrated speeches, made before the Lords, on the impeachment of Governor Hastings, in June, 1788, Mr. Burke thus exclaimed: ‘He has this day surprised the thousands who hung with rapture on his accents, by such an array of talents, such an exhibition of capacity, such a display of powers, as are unparalleled in the annals of oratory; a display that reflected the highest honour upon himself—lustre upon letters—renown upon Parliament—glory upon the country. Of all species of rhetoric, of every kind of eloquence that has been witnessed or recorded, either in ancient or modern times; whatever the acuteness of the bar, the dignity of the senate, the solidity of the judgment-seat, and the sacred morality of the pulpit, have hitherto furnished, nothing has equalled what we have this day heard in Westminster Hall. No holy seer of religion, no sage, no statesman, no orator, no man of any literary description whatever, has come up, in the one instance, to the pure sentiments of morality; or in the other, to that variety of knowledge, force of imagination, propriety and vivacity of allusion, beauty and elegance of diction, strength and copiousness of style, pathos and sublimity of conception, to which we have this day listened with ardour and admiration. From poetry up to eloquence, there is not a species of composition of which a complete and perfect specimen might not, from that single speech, be culled and collected.’ And yet Sheridan as a moralist was as defective in principle as he was incorrect in practice. Sheridan, poor, deserted, diseased, and wretched, expired in loneliness and misery; and so died, not purely, as has been alleged, a martyr to his love of liberty, but rather to his vices and licentiousness. An acquaintance, therefore, with Sheridan, whilst it could not fail of improving the judgment,





RICHARD SHERIDAN.

R Sheridan

Painted by Sir J. Reynolds, Engraved by S. Woffe

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enlivening the fancy, and heightening the imagination and wit of the dullest of his associates, yet it could not also fail of injuring that high tone of morals with which the heart of a monarch of a Christian country should be especially inspired. In the amours of Mr. Sheridan, the name of the Prince of Wales was consequently involved, and this circumstance additionally tended to the permanent injury of his character and reputation.

Of the Prince's intimacy with Sheridan many pleasant and, we regret to add, painful anecdotes are related. The following will shew the familiar footing on which they stood with each other. The Prince became a member of Brookes' Club, in order to have more frequent intercourse with Mr. Fox. His Royal Highness was the only person who was ever admitted without a ballot, and on his first appearance every member rose and welcomed him by acclamation. When Fox first became acquainted with Sheridan, he was so delighted with his company and brilliant conversation, that he became exceedingly anxious to get him admitted as a member of Brookes' club, which he frequented every night. Sheridan was frequently proposed, but as often had one black ball in the ballot, which disqualified him. At length, the balls being marked, the hostile ball was traced to old George Selwyn, a stickler for aristocracy. Sheridan was apprised of this, and desired that his name might be put up again, and that the further conduct of the matter might be left to himself. Accordingly, on the evening that he was to be balloted for, Sheridan arrived at Brookes', arm in arm with the Prince of Wales, just ten minutes before the balloting began. Being shewn into the candidates' waiting-room, the waiter was ordered to tell Mr. Selwyn that the Prince desired to speak with him below immediately; Selwyn obeyed the summons without delay, and Sheridan, to whom he had no personal dislike, entertained him for half an hour with a political story, which interested him very much, but which, of course, had no foundation in truth. During Selwyn's absence the balloting went on, and Sheridan was chosen, which circumstance was announced to himself and the Prince, by the waiter, with the preconcerted signal of stroking his chin with his hand. Sheridan immediately got up, and apologizing for

an absence of a few minutes, told Mr. Selwyn that the Prince would finish the narrative, the catastrophe of which he would find very *remarkable*.

Sheridan now went up stairs, was introduced to and welcomed by the club, and was soon in all his glory. The Prince in the mean time was left in no very enviable situation, for he had not the least idea of being left to conclude the story, the thread of which (if it had a thread) he had entirely forgotten, or which, perhaps, his eagerness to serve Sheridan's cause prevented him from listening to with sufficient attention to take up where Sheridan had dropped it. Still by means of his auditor's occasional assistance, he got on pretty well for a few minutes, when a question from Selwyn, as to the flat contradiction of a part of his Royal Highness' story to that of Sheridan, completely posed him, and he stuck fast. After much floundering to set himself right, and finding all was in vain, the Prince burst into a loud laugh, and exclaimed, 'D—n the fellow! to leave me to finish this infernal story, of which I know as much as the child unborn—but never mind, Selwyn, as Sherry does not seem inclined to come back, let us go up stairs, and I dare say, Fox or some of them will be able to tell you all about it.' They adjourned to the club-room, and Selwyn now detected the manœuvre. Sheridan rose, made him a low bow, and said, 'Pon my honour, Mr. Selwyn, I beg pardon for being absent so long, but the fact is, I happened to drop into devilish good company: they have just been making me a member, without even one *black ball*, and here I am.' 'The devil they have,' exclaimed Selwyn. 'Facts speak for themselves,' replied Sheridan, 'and as I know you are very glad of my election, accept my grateful thanks (pressing his hand on his breast and bowing very low) for *your* friendly suffrage: and now, if you'll sit down by me, I'll finish my story, for I dare say his Royal Highness has found considerable difficulty in doing justice to its merits.' 'Your story! it is all a lie from beginning to end,' screamed out Selwyn, amidst immoderate fits of laughter from all parts of the room.

Among the nobility who at this time were more particularly honoured with the countenance of the Prince of Wales, were the Dukes of Norfolk, Bedford, Devonshire, Portland, and

Northumberland, the Earls of Derby, Cholmondeley, and Fitzwilliam, and Lords St. John, Ponsonby, Craven, Southampton, and Rawdon (afterwards the Earl of Moira), who, after having passed the greater part of his life in the enjoyment of the respect and esteem of his fellow countrymen, became the object of their scorn and contempt, by the mean and pitiful conduct which he pursued in the investigation of the charges which were brought against the late Queen Caroline. In regard to the connection of his Royal Highness with the other noblemen, he derived very little moral benefit or advantage. As the descendants of the illustrious champions of freedom, or as men of great talents and acquisitions, they were fit associates for the heir apparent to the throne of Great Britain, but this assisted but little in discouraging that general *penchant* for the female sex, which, however it may accord with continental manners, ill agrees with the principles of morality, or the opinions and views of the Christian population. Example is unfortunately, as well as fortunately, the school of mankind. In the short space of three years, the Prince had been introduced to circles as dissipated as they were gay, and as immoral as they were dissipated. His personal and mental endowments attracted for him the admiration of women distinguished as much for rank and virtue, as for duplicity, licentiousness, and infidelity.

The residence of the Prince of Wales was now chiefly confined to Carlton-house, it having been presented to him by his father, and it soon became the focus of 'conviviality. Brilliant were the flashes of festive wit which enlivened the royal board, and some idea may be formed of the nature and spirit of those meetings from the following comico-tragico event which took place, in which the celebrated George Hanger was the principal performer.

It is well known, that the above-mentioned person was the particular companion of his late majesty, when Prince of Wales, and many of the youthful improprieties which he committed were ascribed, by the King, to the company which he kept; and particularly to the society of Sheridan and Major Hanger. On a particular occasion, when the latter was raising recruits, the King hearing that the Prince was taken from place to place

by him and others in high life, collecting mobs and throwing money to them in large quantities, for the sake of creating the fun of seeing a scramble, and other worse purposes, he, with much feeling, exclaimed, 'D—n Sherry, and I must hang—hang—Hanger, for they will break my heart, and ruin the hopes of my country.'

The following will be read as a rich treat to the lovers of fun and mischief: it shews the extraordinary gaiety of the disposition of the Prince of Wales, and the familiar manner in which he lived with his companions.

It was at the celebration of her Majesty's birth-day, 1782, that Major Hanger made his first appearance at court; and it may be said to have been a debut which proved a source of infinite amusement to all who were present, and to no one more so than the Prince of Wales, who was no stranger to the singularity of his character, and the general eccentricity of his actions. Being a major in the Hessian service, he wore his uniform at the ball, which was a short blue coat with gold frogs, with a belt, unusually broad, across his shoulders, from which his sword depended. This dress being a little particular, when compared with the full-trimmed suits of velvet and satin about him, though, as professional, strictly conformable to the etiquette of the court, attracted the notice of his Majesty and his attendants; and the buz,—'Who is he?' 'Whence does he come?' &c. &c. was heard in all parts of the room. Thus he became the focus of attraction, and especially when the contrast presented itself of his selecting the beautiful Miss Gunning as his partner. He led her out to dance a minuet, but when, on the first crossing of his lovely partner, he put on his hat, which was of the largest Kevenhüller kind, ornamented with two large black and white feathers, the figure which he cut was so truly ridiculous and preposterous, that even the gravity of his Majesty could not be restrained: the grave faces of his Ministers relaxed into a smile, and the Prince of Wales was actually thrown into a convulsive fit of laughter. There was such an irresistible provocation to risibility in the *tout ensemble* of his appearance and style of movement, that his fair partner was reluctantly obliged to lose sight of good manners, and could scarcely finish the minuet; but Hanger himself joined in

the laugh which was raised at his expense, and thereby extricated his partner from her embarrassment. This is, perhaps, the first time that the *pas grave* of a minuet has been considered as a mighty good jest, but there are moments when even the most serious circumstances serve only to produce a comic effect.

The Major now stood up to dance a country-dance, but here his motions were so completely antic, and so much resembling those of a mountebank, that he totally discomfited his partner, put the whole set into confusion, and excited a degree of laughter throughout the room, such as had never before been witnessed in a royal drawing-room.

On the following day, the subject of the Major's ludicrous debut at court became the subject of conversation at the convivial board at Carlton-house, when the Prince proposed, that a letter should be written to the Major, thanking him, in the name of the company which had assembled in the drawing-room, for the pleasure and gratification which he had afforded them. The joke was considered a good one: writing materials were ordered, and the Prince himself indited the following letter, which was copied by Sheridan, with whose hand-writing the major was not acquainted.

'St. James' Street, Sunday Morning.

'The company who attended the ball on Friday last at St. James', present their compliments to Major Hanger, and return him their unfeigned thanks for the variety with which he enlivened the insipidity of that evening's entertainment. The *gentlemen* want words to describe their admiration of the truly grotesque and humorous figure which he exhibited; and the *ladies* beg leave to express their acknowledgments for the lively and animated emotions that his stately, erect, and perpendicular form could not fail to excite in their delicate and susceptible bosoms. His gesticulations and martial deportment were truly admirable, and have raised an impression that will not soon be effaced at St. James'.'

This letter produced a highly ludicrous scene, which often excited a laugh when the Prince related it to his guests, as one of the most humorous which had occurred to him during his life.

On the day subsequent to the receipt of the letter, the Prince purposely invited George Hanger to dine at Carlton-House, and it formed a part of the plot of his Royal Highness that Sheridan should not be invited. After dinner the conversation turned designedly upon the leading circumstances of the late ball; and on the Prince ironically complimenting the Major on the serious effect, which his appearance must have had on the hearts of the ladies, he in a very indignant manner drew from his pocket the letter which he had received, declaring that it was a complete affront upon him, and that the sole motive of the writer was to insult him, and to turn him into ridicule. The Prince requested permission to read the letter, and having perused it, he fully coincided in the opinion of the Major, that no other motive could have actuated the writer than to offer him the greatest affront.

The Major's anger arose: 'Blitz und Hölle!' he exclaimed; 'if I could discover the writer, he should give me immediate satisfaction.'

'I admire your spirit,' said the Prince: 'how insulting to talk of your grotesque figure!'

'And then to turn your stately, erect, and perpendicular form into ridicule,' said Mr. Fox.

'And to talk of your gesticulations,' said Captain Morris.

'Sapperment!' exclaimed the Major, 'but the writer shall be discovered.'

'Have you not the slightest knowledge of the hand-writing?' asked the Prince; 'the characters are, I think, somewhat familiar to me. Allow me to peruse the letter again.' The letter was handed to the Prince: 'I am certain I am not mistaken,' he said; 'this is the hand-writing of that mischievous fellow, Sheridan.'

'Sheridan!' exclaimed the Major; 'impossible—it cannot be.'

'Hand the letter to Fox,' said the Prince; 'he knows Sheridan's hand-writing well.'

'This is undoubtedly the hand-writing of Sheridan,' said Fox, looking at the letter.

'Then he shall give me immediate satisfaction,' said the Major, rising from the table, and, addressing himself to Captain

Morris, requested him to be the bearer of his message to Mr. Sheridan. Having written the note, in which a full and public apology was demanded, or a place of meeting appointed, Captain Morris was despatched with it, and in the mean time he (the Major) would retire to his lodgings to await the answer from Mr. Sheridan. The Prince now pretended to interfere, expressing his readiness to be a mediator between the parties; but at the same time he contrived every now and then to increase the flame of the Major's resentment, by some artful insinuations as to the grossness of the affront, and complimenting him on the spirited manner in which he had behaved on the occasion. The Major was determined not to be appeased; and he left the room muttering 'D—n the impudent fellow! grotesque figure! — perpendicular form! — gesticulations!'

The Major had no sooner retired, than the whole party burst into a loud laugh; the Prince had brought him to the very point he wished, and in about an hour Captain Morris arrived with Sheridan, who entered immediately into the spirit of the adventure. It was then agreed that Sheridan should accept the challenge, appointing the following morning at day-break in Battersea Fields, and that Mr. Fox should be the bearer of the answer of Mr. Sheridan to the offended Major—Mr. Sheridan undertaking, on his part, to provide the necessary surgical assistance.

On the following morning the parties were punctually at the spot; the Major accompanied by Captain Morris, Mr. Sheridan by Mr. Fox, the Prince of Wales disguised as a surgeon, being seated in the carriage which conveyed the latter gentleman. The customary preliminaries being arranged, the parties took their station; the signal to fire was given—no effect took place: the seconds loaded the pistols a second time—the parties fired again—still no effect was produced.

'D—n the fellow,' said the Major to his second, 'I can't hit him.'

'The third fire generally takes effect,' said Captain Morris, who with the utmost difficulty could keep his risible faculties in order, whilst the Prince in the carriage was almost convulsed with laughter at the grotesque motions of the Major.

The signal to fire was given the third time—the effect was decisive—Mr. Sheridan fell, as if dead, on his back.

‘Killed, by G—d!’ said Captain Morris; ‘let us fly instantly:’ and without giving the Major time to collect himself, he hurried him to the carriage, which immediately drove away towards town. The Prince descended from the carriage, almost faint with laughter, and joined Sheridan and Fox, the former of whom, as soon as the Major’s carriage was out of sight, had risen from his prostrate station, unscathed as when he entered the field; for, to complete the farce, it had been previously arranged that no ball should be put into the pistols, and that Sheridan was to fall on the third fire. The Prince with his two associates drove off immediately to town, and a message was sent to Major Hanger, desiring his immediate attendance at Carlton House. The Major obeyed the summons, and he entered the apartment of the Prince with a most dolorous countenance. ‘Bad business this,’ said the Prince, ‘a very bad business, Hanger; but I have the satisfaction to tell you that Sheridan is not materially hurt, and if you will dine with me this day, I will invite a gentleman, who will give you an exact account of the state in which your late antagonist lies. Remain here till dinner time, and all may yet be well.’

The Prince, from goodness of heart, and not wishing that the Major should have the painful impression on his mind, that he had been the instrument of the death of a fellow-creature, and one of the most convivial of their companions, had imparted to the Major the consolatory information that his antagonist was not seriously injured; and the Major looked forward to the hour of dinner with some anxiety, when he was to receive further information on the subject. The hour came—the party were assembled in the drawing-room; ‘Now, Hanger,’ said the Prince, ‘I’ll introduce a gentleman to you, who shall give you all the information you can wish.’ The door opened, and Sheridan entered. The Major started back with wonder: ‘How! how! how is this?’ he stammered; ‘I thought I had killed you?’ ‘Not quite, my good fellow,’ said Sheridan, offering the Major his hand; ‘I am not yet quite good enough to go to the world above—and as to that below, I am not yet fully qualified for it,

therefore, I considered it better to defer my departure from this to a future period ; and now I doubt not that his Royal Highness will give you an explicit explanation of the whole business—but I died well, did I not, Hanger ?’

The Prince now declared that the whole plot was concocted by himself, and hoped, that when the Major next fought such a duel, he might be in a coach to view it. Conviviality reigned throughout the remainder of the evening—the song and glass went round—the Prince singing the parody on ‘ There’s a difference between a beggar and a queen,’ which was composed by Captain Morris, and which is to be found in the twenty-fourth edition of ‘ Songs, Political and Convivial,’ by that first of lyric poets.

In reverting to the *private* character of the principal associate and adviser of the Prince (we allude to Mr. Fox), we will proceed, in one instance, to redeem the pledge which we gave, in a former part of this work, of proving that the eulogiums which were passed upon Mr. Fox, in regard to the unsullied purity of his honour, were rather the emanations of the enthusiastic brain of the writer, than a fact, based on incontrovertible evidence.

At the time when the Prince had satiated himself with the charms of Mrs. Robinson, a lady appeared in the hemisphere of fashion, whose beauty was the theme of general admiration, and whose mental endowments were little inferior, if any, to those of the ill-fated *Perdita*. That a meteor of this kind should be blazing in the world, and the Prince of Wales not desire to behold it, could not be expected by those who were in the least aware of his propensities. Of the early life of this lady it becomes us not to speak ; it is only when she appears as one of the characters in the scenes of the eventful drama which we are portraying, that she becomes an object of our notice. At the period, however, when her beauty became the theme of general conversation, she was living secretly under the protection of Mr. Fox, although, to all outward appearance, her conduct was regulated by the strictest rules of propriety and decorum. She was received into the first circles, caressed by all the libertines of rank and fashion, although the doors of the royal drawing-room were closed

against her on account of some little stain which was supposed to attach to her character, and which she could not wipe off to the entire satisfaction of the rigidly virtuous and illustrious female who then presided over the British court. Moving, therefore, in a sphere different to that of his Royal Highness, he had no opportunity of obtaining a view of her in public, and he therefore applied to one of his immediate and confidential associates to effect an interview—and this associate was no other person than Mr. Fox himself. It was rather a startling commission for him, but at this period Mr. Fox so completely compromised his honour as to become the most active pander to the passions of the Prince, and Mrs. Armstead was one evening introduced by him to the Prince at Windsor. The secret must now be told : from that moment Mrs. Robinson declined in his affections. She declares in her narrative, that she found herself surrounded by enemies, and subject to attacks, but from what quarter they came she knew not ;—she was assailed by pamphlets, but of the authors of them she was ignorant ;—she was libelled, caricatured, insulted, and abused, and all on account of falsehoods which were propagated to her injury by individuals, who, like the bat, kept themselves in the dark, that their hideous forms might not be seen. And from what quarter did all these annoyances in reality proceed ?—from a set of unprincipled and dishonourable men, who saw that as long as his Royal Highness was under the influence of a lady in no measure connected with their party, and whom they could not make subservient to their own personal views, their plans could not be carried on with that prospect of ultimate success, as if that lady were supplanted, and one substituted for her, who would fall into all their views, and through the medium of whom they could obtain the requisite information of the proceedings of the opposite party, who were endeavouring to obtain the ascendancy in the councils of the Prince. Mr. Fox and his party beheld in Mrs. Armstead the very individual who was to accomplish this task, and every instrument was now set in motion, in the first instance, by base and insidious reports to defame the character of Mrs. Robinson, to undermine the attachment of the Prince for her ; and, in the second, by a continued course of annoyance and persecution, to induce

her to leave the country. Mr. Fox undertook to effect the latter, and the successful manner in which he executed his dastardly commission has been already described.

Mrs. Armstead now became the companion of the Prince, and Mr. Fox consoled himself for the temporary loss of her edifying society by the benefit which her influence over his Royal Highness obtained for his party, personally and politically. In a short time, however, Mrs. Armstead shared the fate of her exiled predecessor, when Mr. Fox kindly and *honourably* accepted of her again; and we shall, in the sequel, find, when the question of the Regency came to be discussed, that he was travelling on the continent with her, pointing out to her the beauties of southern France and Italy, and recruiting himself from his career of profligate dissipation in the contemplation of her faded charms.

The ingredients of which honour is composed we believe to be fixed and determined, however differently they may be amalgamated, according to the natural character of the individual; but we have minutely analysed this transaction in all its principles, and we hesitate not to say, that we have not been able to discover one single ingredient in it of which honour, even in its most confined latitude, is supposed to be composed.

We pretend not to enter the lists with any of our cotemporaries on the authenticity or originality of their respective statements, as that is a question which must be decided by the public voice; but we cannot refrain expressing our indignation at the attempts of some of them to purify and bleach the character of his Royal Highness, by blackening the characters of others, whose greatest misfortune in life was their connexion with him and his associates. We feel a high and becoming respect for the virtues which his Royal Highness possessed, which were allowed to be great and eminent before they were contaminated by an association with individuals so deeply steeped in dishonour and moral turpitude; but we feel a still higher degree of indignation for those who, to serve their own interested views, could plunge him into a vortex of dissipation and of profligacy, which ultimately reduced him to such a state of disgrace, unparalleled almost in the history of princes, and which

alienated from him the good opinion of that people over whom he was one day destined to rule.

We have been led into these remarks, influenced by the true spirit of impartiality, and with the sole view of doing justice to those characters which have been maligned merely for the purpose of courting the favour of 'the powers that be,' and to the utter falsification and perversion of the facts themselves, as they have been transmitted to us by individuals, whose veracity or testimony has never been impeached, and also in open defiance of chronological truth. We allude particularly to the remarks inserted in the *Court Journal* of July 3, 1830, in which, in order to cast the odium of the affair of Mrs. Robinson on her own shoulders, and to alleviate those of his Royal Highness from the burthen of the iniquity, an attempt is made to throw the hue of discredit on the whole of her statement, by a pretended discovery of certain anachronisms and inconsistencies with which it is said to abound.

In our extracts from the statement of Mrs. Robinson, contained in her autobiography, which was too long to insert in this work, we omitted the following passage:—

'At an interview with Lord Malden, I perceived that he regretted the task he had undertaken; but he assured me that the Prince was almost frantic whenever he suggested a wish to decline interfering. Once I remember his Lordship's telling me that *the Duke of Cumberland* had made him an early visit, informing him that the Prince was most wretched on my account, and imploring him to continue his services only a short time longer.'

The remarks made by the *Court Journalist* on the above passage are as follows:—'At this period, the Prince was only eighteen years of age, Lord Malden only twenty-three, and the *Duke of Cumberland* only nine. We leave the reader to judge of the lady's accuracy, and of the open field she had for the exercise of her talents upon *such youths*.'

By what epithet ought this error to be characterized? The Duke of Cumberland spoken of by Mrs. Robinson was the husband of Mrs. Horton; on account of whose marriage, the celebrated act was passed in 1772, restricting the marriages of the descendants of George II. He is the identical Duke of

Cumberland, of whom a writer of that day observes,—‘To reproach a man for being an idiot, is an insult to Almighty God.’ The *present* Duke of Cumberland was simply then Prince Ernest Augustus, and, at the time of the connexion between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Robinson, was certainly only nine years old. We leave this without any further comment; a school-boy would be whipped for such ignorance.

The next perversion of facts, which, according to the diction of the Journalist, throws discredit on the narrative of the lady, is to be found in the supposed anachronism which exists between the dates of the Bishop of Osnaburg leaving England, in 1780, and the date of the letter, in 1783. His Royal Highness did certainly leave England on the 30th of December, 1780, as related by the Journalist; but, in regard to the date of the letter, he seems to be ignorant, that although the facts took place in 1779—80, it was not till the year 1803, that Mrs. Robinson writes to her friend in America, (Colonel, afterwards General *Tarleton*, not *Carleton*, as the Journalist has it,) giving him a full and explicit account of the whole of her connexion with the Prince. Mrs. Robinson does not say, that the facts took place in 1803, but she writes the account of them in that year, and thus the objections of the Journalist to the accuracy of the statement of Mrs. Robinson again break under him.

We cannot dismiss this subject finally from our attention without passing our animadversions on the falsity of the statement of the Journalist,—that the connexion of the Prince with Mrs. Robinson was broken off on account of the Prince’s *friends* opening his eyes to her machinations, and thereby rescuing him from so pernicious a connexion.

Let us inquire who were those friends, who stepped in so prudently and laudably to rescue the Prince from the predicament in which he found himself. They were the very men who had been the means of introducing Mrs. Armstead to him; who skipped about with the St. Vitus’s dance of abhorrence at the moral turpitude of his connexion with Mrs. Robinson; but who placed over their consciences the healing plaister of expediency, when they conducted Mrs. Armstead to his arms. The name and temporary influence of the latter were a passport to the whole

party to the convivial board of his Royal Highness, to his bacchanalian orgies, and to a participation in scenes, in which every fine and noble feeling of the heart—every principle of honour, integrity, and truth was sacrificed on the shrine of personal emolument. And in regard to the machinations of Mrs. Robinson,—with whom did she machinate, if we may be allowed the expression? Who were the men that she collected around her to work upon the credulity of ‘the simple, inexperienced youth?’ Where are the proofs that she committed an interested action, by which the advantages of herself or any of her friends were promoted by her connexion with the Prince? She came to him impoverished, and she left him the same. His bond was restored to him—his trinkets, to the amount of the paltry sum of 100*l.*, were returned to him. Did Mrs. Armstead do the same?—on the contrary, did not the bounty and the presents of his Royal Highness furnish her with the means of enabling the individual, who had meanly taken her to his arms again, on her repudiation by the Prince, to continue his habits of extravagance and profligacy? Machination implies a concert of action in particular individuals for the attainment of some specific end; but we have not a single proof, during the whole of the connexion of Mrs. Robinson with the Prince, that she combined or coalesced with a single person for the accomplishment of any interested view.—Machinations were not committed *by* her, but *against* her, and they were deep, disgraceful, and degrading to the parties in whose breasts they originated.

We now take our leave of this subject; we have given our feeble aid in rescuing the memory of a beautiful, unfortunate, but highly-gifted female, from the odium which has been attempted to be thrown upon her character: faultless it was not. The temptations with which she had to contend were more than a woman’s strength could conquer; and if she fell, let Charity drop a tear upon her errors, and let them stand as a warning example to others, whose misfortune it may be to be placed in similar circumstances.

It was about this period that his Majesty George III. again evinced some symptoms of that aberration of mind to which he was habitually subject, and which threw such a heavy cloud

over the latter part of his life. The political contentions which at this time agitated the nation, the profligate life of the Prince of Wales, and his apparent subserviency to all the views of the opposition, tended to destroy the equanimity of the King's mind, and he fell a prey to habitual dejection; becoming silent, thoughtful, and uncommunicative, instead of evincing his customary equality of temper, suavity of manners, and cheerfulness of disposition. It must, however, be taken into the account, that his Majesty was now no more the gay impetuous youth; the cares of government had sitten, for a length of time, heavily on his shoulders, and the loss of the American colonies had affected him deeply. The buoyancy of youth had yielded to the sobriety of age; and, although he did not deny to the Prince of Wales the right to the enjoyment of the pleasures of life, yet he was constantly exhorting him to partake of them with moderation, and not to lose sight of the dignified station to which Providence had called him. The admonitions of the royal parent were listened to with becoming and respectful attention, but their effect was as transient as the characters traced on the shores of the ocean, which the next tide effaces, and they are lost for ever to the view.

The Prince repeatedly offended his father by the bold and unqualified manner in which he spoke of his ministers, deprecating their measures and ridiculing their talents: thus, in the year 1781, which was a most inauspicious period for the British arms, and the nation, getting tired of a long and inglorious struggle, vainly persevered to destroy those rational principles of freedom in our brethren across the Atlantic, which we are so jealous to preserve, and ready to defend at home,—at this time many were the expedients proposed to bring about an accommodation, but the majority of them were more likely to perplex than to extricate our government: the Prince of Wales, however, undertook to propose a remedy, which would not cost much, would effectually put a stop to the war, and give general satisfaction. The King, his father, demanded of him to state the nature of his projects: the Prince, with great gravity, said, that three half-crowns would buy three halters, and that one of these should be sent to Lord North, then Prime Minister, and

one to each of his chief supporters in the administration. The King was at first surprised at his boldness, but immediately afterwards he ordered this young counsellor to retire to his apartments, and not to approach his sovereign until he had made a proper apology. History is silent as to the apology being made, but Lord North's administration was dismissed in a few months, without receiving the halter; and peace, with its concomitant blessings, was soon restored to Europe.

We wish not to refer to any part of the life of George III. during the melancholy period of his intellectual aberrations, but we cannot refrain from inserting the following truly pathetic counsel which his Majesty, in one of his lucid intervals, gave to the Prince of Wales, respecting the character of those with whom he associated.

'George,' said the King, 'keep good company; methinks I am already dead. I solemnly conjure thee, George, keep good company. Be a father to thy sisters, and a husband to the Queen, thy mother. O George, she well deserves thy tenderness. Banish the unworthy from thy presence: they flatter thee, and call thee good and gracious, and so they would the man that had dethroned thee. Princes are always good and gracious to those who fatten on their favours, and from their smiles draw omens of still greater spoils.

'George, let the virtuous counsel thee. Study thy people's good; their interests are united with thy own. In their happiness thou wilt find thy truest glory.

'And remember, George, thou art mortal; the vices of thy manhood will plant with thorns the pillow of reflecting age. Be wise in time; and let devotion to thy God obtain a glorious conquest—the conquest of thyself and death.'

Such was the substance of the royal admonition. The Prince wept and retired, his bosom convulsed with contending passions. The effect, however, was but transitory. He was so entangled in the chains of dissipation and of libertinism, that he could not shake them off. As his appetite increased, fresh objects were always at hand to satisfy it; and, to the shame of his associates, be it recorded, that they were not always very nice in regard to the objects whom they selected.

Of the truth of this, a more striking proof cannot be given than the connexion which he formed, about this time, with Mrs. Billington, the celebrated singer.

The exterior of this woman had something to recommend her to the attention of the royal libertine, but her manners were distinguished by the utmost grossness, and in many instances by the most positive indelicacy. To enter into any description of the life of Mrs. Billington previously to her connexion with the Prince, were to stain our pages with the delineation of scenes injurious to the interests of the rising generation, and at variance with those principles which we have laid down for our rule and guide, in the accomplishment of the delicate task which we have undertaken. The exposure of vice may, in many instances, be of essential benefit to youth on his entrance into the world, as it is a monster which has only to be exhibited in its real and naked form, to be despised and shunned; but, on the other hand, it has its seductions and its blandishments, and they may, by talent and address, be so clothed in a captivating garb, that the youthful heart, glowing with passion, may long to become familiar with them, and to partake of the enjoyment which their possession is supposed to afford.

It was behind the scenes of the theatre that the Prince first became acquainted with Mrs. Billington, and at that time she appeared to be his chief inducement for visiting the theatre. Those, who like ourselves are aware of some particular traits in the character of Mrs. Billington, and of the peculiar penchant, which was her ruling passion in her intercourse with her favourites, must be well aware, that the Prince of Wales was, notwithstanding his exalted rank and high personal endowments, not exactly the individual who could long enchain her affections. The vicinity of her dwelling to the Thames, it being situate at Fulham, and immediately on the banks of the river, offered many facilities to the Prince to partake of the society of the fascinating syren, and to enjoy the delight of her musical conversaziones, which were held almost every night that her presence was not required at the theatre.

This connexion of the Prince was not, however, of long duration; the coarseness of her manners soon disgusted him, and he declared at last, that the only satisfaction he enjoyed

in her society, was when he shut his eyes and opened his ears.

We shall briefly state another amour which followed that of Mrs. Billington, and that was with Mrs. Crouch, also an actress, who was then in the zenith of her beauty. On this lady the Prince expended considerable sums, in one instance to the amount of 10,000*l.*, independently of a profusion of jewels and trinkets, which were purchased at Gray's, to the amount of 5000*l.*, and which, when in a short time afterwards, a schedule of his Royal Highness' debts was laid before his Royal Parent, excited so strongly his disapprobation and resentment, that the King refused to interfere in the liquidation of his debts. Kelly, in his *Reminiscences*, when treating of the life of Mrs. Crouch, studiously avoids making any mention of the impression which her charms made upon his Royal Highness; but it is melancholy to relate, that after having squandered immense sums of money, and exposed himself to the ridicule of his associates, he found that he had selected an individual, who, although her person and form were beauteous, was so addicted to intoxication, that her breath became disgustingly tainted, which gave rise to the well-known simile of George Hanger, comparing her throat to a smoky chimney—foul and stinking.

In addition to the sum above-mentioned, he settled upon her 1,200*l.* a-year, but when the debts of the Prince were arranged previously to his marriage, Mrs. Crouch's annuity was not recognized, as it was said *no valuable consideration* had been given for it. About this time the Prince of Wales and the present Earl Grey, were suitors for the favours of the Duchess of Devonshire, mother of the present Duke, after an understood separation from her husband (who had under his protection Lady Elizabeth Foster, the late Duchess). Earl Grey succeeded, and the Prince was ousted. The fruits of this connexion was a daughter, a very accomplished lady.

Before we enter upon that important event in the life of his Royal Highness (we allude to his MARRIAGE with Mrs. Fitzherbert), we shall speak of some transactions in which he was engaged at this period, and by which he incurred a very considerable share of obloquy.

Athletic sports seem ever to have been the favourites with the English nation, and it was no doubt sound policy to encourage them, inasmuch as the safety and independence of a nation must in a great degree depend upon the martial spirit and habits of its natives. Our ancestors, in their rude and boisterous sports, seem to have had two objects in view—to season the youth of England to firmness of mind and agility of body, or, in other words, to make them skilful in the science of offence and defence, as well as intrepid in the encountering of danger; and it must be confessed, that our national character, from the earliest records of our history, appears to have been admirably calculated to receive impressions of the kind here described. The character of a native Englishman, undebased by adventitious circumstances, is, perhaps, the noblest that the present race of men in any quarter of the globe can produce. In the hour of danger he is bold,—in the moment of victory he is generous and humane. No nation that ever made war so frequently as the English nation, could ever boast of such a series of victories, unsullied by any imputations of cruelty, as those that have attended the arms of England in every quarter of the globe. There are, undoubtedly, unworthy exceptions; but the courage of Englishmen in general is unalloyed with any mixture of ferocity, and, in many instances, we have been most at a loss whether to admire the invincible resolution, or the matchless generosity of our heroes. The sports of England, for the most part, have a tendency to confirm this temper, and it is a mistaken humanity which would lead us to see those sports abolished; not that we mean to advocate the brutal practice of prize-fighting, much less to sanction the distinguished patronage which the Prince bestowed upon the pugilists of the day, degrading himself in their society, and exposing himself to the contaminating influence of their immoral habits: but we prefer the noble and manly manner in which an Englishman resents an affront, to the duelling of France, to the detestable American fashion of gouging, to the Russian mode of boxing ears with the flat hand, and pulling of beards, or to the music-houses of Holland, where the orgies of the night terminate with a skirmish of knives. Let us seek for no such foreign improvements,—

let us be contented with those bold active sports which our ancestors provided for us, and which are so suited to the genius and character of our countrymen. Let our populace leave the Frenchmen to their pistols or swords—the Hollanders to their knives—the Russians to their woman's play, and the Americans to their savage habits. Let the English retain their honest, national, pugilistic style of contest, in which as much energy and spirit are required as in any other species of combat—where far more activity and hardiness are required, far more skill may be shown, and far more generosity exhibited, than in any of the other modes of fighting to which we have alluded.

That his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales should have been an encourager of pugilistic sports, may, perhaps, have been expected of him as a British prince of his manly form and resolute constitution of mind; but that he should have personally attended the combats, and, in some instances, been the fomentor of them, must have naturally depreciated him in the estimation of the virtuous and the good. He was stigmatized, not in terms, but by implication, as brutal and sanguinary, in having sanctioned, by his presence, some of these brutal exhibitions; but still there were some, who extenuated that conduct by viewing in it a desire in a British prince to promote the martial spirit and military habits of his future subjects, and in whose skill, bravery, and invincible resolution, he was to look for the security of his crown.

Amongst the other sports to which the English nation are more peculiarly attached, and which may, in some degree, be regarded as a national sport, is the amusement of horse-racing. Since the days of Charles II., who gave Newmarket the ton by visiting it with his court, horse-races have been one of the favourite amusements of the nobility and landed gentry of England; and at the time when his Royal Highness became a sportsman, the practice of keeping race-horses was encouraged and countenanced by some of the first and best characters in the country. On his Royal Highness attaining his majority, he turned his attention to the collection of a stud of running-horses; and as he pursued his object with ardour, he soon found himself master of a stud not at all inferior to the best

in the kingdom. His horses were to be seen at all the celebrated race-courses, and his Royal Highness often condescended to honour Newmarket, and other places of sporting resort, with his presence. These amusements were attended with an enormous expense; but no estimate can be formed of the amount which his Royal Highness incurred on this account, from the circumstance that the sums of money expended on a racing establishment, and the loss or gain of *bonâ fide* matches, bear no proportion to the sums that are hazarded upon betting speculations. With regard to the sums which he expended on betting, it is from the nature of the thing not to be expected that we should advance even a guess. The probability is, that his Royal Highness, like most other gentlemen of the turf, experienced his share of the vicissitudes of fortune, and sometimes was a considerable gainer, and at others a considerable loser: general report declares the latter to have been most frequently the case, but there was probably in this instance, as well as in many others, a large share of exaggeration, though it is likely that the candour of his Royal Highness, and his well-known spirit of honour, would expose him to some of the artifices of which the gentlemen of the turf have been accused, while his proud and dignified sense of propriety would not allow him to avail himself of those advantages which others would not scruple to practise with impunity at his expense. Few characters of eminence have distinguished themselves on the turf who have not been suspected at one time or other of these unjustifiable artifices, and hence the graver part of the world has been disposed to view these sporting meetings with anything else than sentiments of approbation.

That the Prince of Wales, on attaching himself to the sports of the turf, should have rendered himself liable to these imputations, was a consequence naturally to be expected from the equality that necessarily prevails on such occasions. Losers could no more conceal their chagrin when a prince was the winner, than they could when they paid their money to an equal; and they well knew that his Royal Highness was as liable to be deceived and imposed upon by his grooms, trainers, and dependants, as any other gentleman of the turf: and, therefore, whenever the royal horses did not perform according to

their satisfaction, either by winning when they had an extraordinary opinion of their fleetness, or by losing when they thought they would prove deficient in spirit and speed, the result was the same; they attributed their disappointment, not to any accidental circumstances over which the Prince of Wales or his servants could not possibly have any control, but to some unfair manœuvres on the part of the Prince and his dependants, for the purpose of misleading the public judgment. The case of his Royal Highness' celebrated horse *Escape*, and respecting which we shall have to enter into some detail at a future period, will fully illustrate the truth of the foregoing statement.

In the mean time, the clamour against his Royal Highness on account of the ruinous expenses incurred in the maintenance of his racing stud was loud and incessant; and in order to palliate those proceedings, his partisans very injudiciously beheld, in the attachment of George III. to the pleasures of the chase, the same good reasons for imputing to his Majesty an equal degree of censure, not considering that a very wide difference exists between the two pursuits. The chase is an exercise highly salubrious and manly, and it is totally distinct in its best features and characteristics from the pleasures of the turf. The former encourages not the ruinous spirit of gambling; and, although a person may be a member of a field of hunters, he may be still as select in his companions, as if he were following a brace of greyhounds with his immediate friends on his own estate. It is the suspicious and questionable characters with whom, as a patron of the turf, an individual is obliged to associate, which tends to throw an imputation upon him, however high and unsullied his honour and integrity may be in the general relations of life. In this as in other cases which we have mentioned, the very zeal and anxiety evinced by the friends of the Prince to exonerate him from the general charges alleged against the patrons of the turf, only tended to involve him deeper in the obloquy, and to raise the clamour to a still higher pitch against the course of life which he was pursuing.

Surrounded as his Royal Highness was at this time by gamblers of every rank and degree, his losses became immense, his

embarrassments alarming and disgraceful. His nights which were not *otherwise* employed, were spent at the faro-table, whither he was often taken in a state of almost helpless intoxication, to render him the greater dupe of those who were then fattening on the unhallowed spoil obtained by their deliberate villainy.

At this time there lived a Jew in Crutched Friars, who had amassed a splendid fortune by his usurious advances to the extravagant libertines of the age. The exigencies of the Prince became oppressive to him, and every expedient was adopted to obtain the necessary supplies for the extravagances of the day, however great the sacrifice might be. The channels from which the supplies had been hitherto obtained were completely exhausted, and not a farthing could be raised on the responsibility of any of the immediate associates of the Prince; the whole of the party were actually in a state of the deepest poverty; and Major Hanger, in the history of his life, mentions a circumstance in which he, Sheridan, Fox, *an illustrious individual*, and a Mr. Berkeley, repaired to a celebrated tavern then known by the name of the Staffordshire Arms, where, after carousing with some dashing Cyprians who were sent for on the occasion, the combined resources of the whole of the party could not defray the expenses of the evening. On this occasion, Sheridan got so intoxicated that he was put to bed, and, on awakening in the morning, he found himself in the character of a hostage for the expenses of the previous night's d bauch.

From such circumstances some idea may be formed of the depressed state of the finances of the whole party—their individual credit was far below par, and their chief and only expectation rested on the responsibility of the Prince, who had *some sort of security* to give, although perhaps at a very distant date.

In regard to the Prince of Wales individually, an immediate supply was indispensably necessary; and Sheridan undertook to set on foot a negotiation with Moses Aaron, of Crutched Friars, who, on hearing that no less a personage than the heir-apparent to the crown was to be the security for the advance,

consented to supply whatever was required, but on such terms as could not fail to draw ruin after them.

Accordingly to the arrangement made with Sheridan, Aaron was introduced to Carlton-house; and the following scene, which took place between those two personages in the anti-chamber of the Prince, previously to their introduction into his presence, will throw some light upon the characters of the Prince's associates, as they were then current in the world :—

'Ah! my old friend Aaron,' said Sheridan, as he entered the room, 'how do you *do*?'

'I should be better, Mr. Sheridan,' said Aaron, 'if every man had his *due*.'

'Then, Moses,' said Sheridan, 'many a man would have a halter.'

'It may be so, Mr. Sheridan,' said Moses; 'you, I know, are a most *conscientious* man, and I dare say you speak as you *feel*.'

'Well hit, Moses,' said Sheridan; 'but hark ye—did you get that little bill done for me?'

'It was not to be done, indeed, Mr. Sheridan,' said Moses.

'No!' exclaimed Sheridan; 'why I thought when my friend Fox had indorsed it, that it was as good as cash.'

'No, Mr. Sheridan,' said Moses, 'it would not do.'

'Money must be devilish scarce, then?' said Sheridan.

'Or,' said Moses, 'there must be something the matter with the credit of the parties.'

'The times—the times,' said Sheridan, 'are very suspicious; but you can perhaps effect it for me by way of annuity?'

'But then, your life, Mr. Sheridan, must be insured,' said Moses; 'and how should I stand then, if you were to have your *due*, according to your own statement,—and then the interest, what security have you to offer?'

'My honour, Moses,' answered Sheridan.

'That won't do, either,' said Moses; 'it is quite threadbare,—it won't pay for turning.'

'But if the Prince joins in the security,' said Sheridan—'how then?'

'That will alter the case,' said Moses.

‘Then,’ said Sheridan, ‘let us go into the Prince.’

From the introduction of this Jew to his Royal Highness may be dated a great portion of the serious embarrassments in which in a short time he was involved. A source was opened to him in which an immediate supply could at any time be obtained; although, if he had not been hurried away by the impetuosity of his passions, which left him not a moment for serious reflection, and by the pernicious counsels of his needy associates, he must have seen that every step which he took involved him deeper in ruin and disgrace. In one instance this Jew raised him £10,000 on a post-obit bond, to be paid on the decease of his father. For this bond he received in reality but £7,500, the remaining sum being made up in various articles, the most useful of which were, perhaps, two hogsheads of *French playing-cards*, and three puncheons of excellent *French cogniac brandy* manufactured at a distillery in White-chapel; a diamond cross and rosary—the said diamonds also manufactured in Houndsditch; and *two hundred tea-urns*, some of which partook of the porosity of the filtering-stone, and which were immediately disposed of to another Jew at a quarter of the price which the conscientious Israelite had charged the Prince. In about three months after the above transaction, the Prince required a further supply of money, and these same tea-urns found their way back again into his possession, and were disposed of at the same cost and sacrifice.

The above is but one of the many ruinous transactions with which we are acquainted, which at this time marked the thoughtless career of the Prince of Wales. If some hoary, venerable friend of his parents expostulated with him on the inevitable consequences of such conduct, the effect was transitory,—amendment was promised, but the promise was never kept.

The following is the copy of a letter which was written about this time by the Prince of Wales to the Duchess of Devonshire; and although it does not contain any of the high-flown rhapsodies of an enamoured youth, it tells enough to show what were the real sentiments of his heart towards her.

‘How little you know *me*, ever-dearest Duchess, and how much you have misconceived the object of this day’s

dinner, which has succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations! It has almost, if not entirely, annihilated every coolness that has, for a short time past, appeared to exist between the Duke of Norfolk and his old friends; and brought Erskine back also. Ask only the Duke of Leinster and Guildford what passed: I believe you never heard such an eulogium from the lips of man pronounced, as I this day have pronounced upon Fox; and so complete a refutation of all the absurd doctrines and foolish distinctions which they have grounded their late conduct upon. He was most honourably, distinctly, and zealously supported by Sheridan, by which they were most completely driven to the wall, and positively pledged themselves hereafter to follow no other line of politics than what Fox and myself would hold out to them; and with a certain degree of contrition expressed by them at their ever having ventured to express a doubt, either respecting Charles or myself. Harry Howard, who has never varied in his sentiments, was overjoyed, and said he never knew anything so well done, or so well timed; and that he should to-night retire to his bed the happiest of men, as his mind was now at ease, which it had not been for some time past. In short, what fell from Sheridan as well as myself was received with rapture by the company, and I consider this as one of the luckiest and most useful days I have spent for ages. As to particulars, I must ask your patience till to-morrow, when I will relate every incident, with which, I am confident, you will be most completely satisfied. Pray, my ever-dearest Duchess, whenever you bestow a thought upon me, have rather a better opinion of my steadiness and firmness. I really think, without being very romantic, I may claim this of you; at the same time I am most grateful to you for your candour, and the affectionate warmth, if I may be allowed so to call it, which dictates the contents of your letter: you may depend upon its being seen by no one else but myself. Depend upon my coming to you to-morrow. I am delighted with your goodness to me, and ever

‘Most devotedly yours,

‘G. P.’

‘*Carlton-house, Friday night.*’

The general obscurity which pervades this letter renders it very difficult to determine the particular circumstances to which his Royal Highness alludes ; but it may be conjectured, that it had some reference to the celebrated contested election for Westminster in 1784, in which Mr. Fox was a candidate, and who was chiefly indebted for his success to the extraordinary influence and exertions which were made by the Duchess of Devonshire in his behalf. That the Prince, however, should have so far lost sight of all respect for himself, or that he could have so far compromised his love of truth, as to utter such an eulogium on Mr. Fox, as he himself expresses it, as never was before pronounced, is one of those traits in his character which it is very difficult to explain. As a politician, the Prince may have had good grounds to approve of the conduct of Mr. Fox ; but as a private man, fulfilling the common relations of life, there was, perhaps, no one in the whole circle of his associates less deserving of any eulogium that could be passed upon him. In one instance, however, the Prince did resent the brutal conduct of Fox, and perhaps there was not any circumstance that could give greater offence to the feelings of his Royal Highness than a studied rudeness to a female. During the celebrated election just mentioned, a few nights after Mr. Fox was returned, a grand supper was given, at which the Prince of Wales, the Duchess of Devonshire, and the most eminent of the whig leaders, were present, for the express purpose of celebrating the auspicious event. Mr. Fox was seated by the side of the Duchess of Devonshire ; and notwithstanding the utmost efforts of Hare, who was one of his most favoured associates, he could not induce him even to say a few words of civility to her Grace, but he actually turned his back upon her, and would not utter a syllable. Piqued at Fox's conduct, Hare, who sat nearly opposite to him, and who was accustomed to treat him with the utmost freedom, took out a pencil, wrote three lines, and pushed the paper across the table to his friend. We shall not transcribe the lines, as they were too energetic, or rather too coarse, to allow of their insertion ; but they adjured Fox, in language as strong as Mæcenas used to Augustus when he wrote to the emperor—'*Siste tandem carnifex !*'—to turn himself round to the lady in question. Fox calmly perused the

billet, and then having torn it into small pieces, which he placed on the table, without appearing to pay any attention to Hare, he turned his back, if possible, still more decidedly on the person on whose behalf the expostulation was written.

This conduct could not fail to attract the attention of the Prince of Wales; and, addressing himself to Fox, he said, 'Suppose you were to consult Buffon on the character of the indigenous animals of this country, which do you suppose you would find to be the most finished brute?'

'I consider each,' said Fox, 'to be a finished brute in its individual character.'

'But,' said the Prince, 'the habits and manners of one brute are more coarse and savage than those of another.'

'That is a point,' said Fox, 'which I cannot determine.'

'But it is one,' said the Prince, 'which every one in this company can determine; for they have just had a specimen given them that no animal in brutish manners can exceed a *Fox*.'

To this celebrated man may be attributed the greater part of the profligacies of the Prince of Wales. Fox loved only three things—women, play, and politics; yet at no period of his life did he ever form a creditable connexion with a woman. He spoke of marriage as a chain which ought to be borne only in the decline of life, but that in youth it was an actual loss of personal liberty and freedom of mind. Sentiments of a similar nature arose in the mind of his Royal Highness; and although state policy might have required him to enter the married state, at no period of his life was he fit for it. It is, however, not a little remarkable that the Prince was one of the most strenuous advisers of Fox to look out for some wealthy heiress as the only means of repairing his shattered fortunes. At this time he had completely dissipated every shilling that he could either command, or that he could raise by the most ruinous expedients. He had even undergone at times many of the severest privations annexed to the vicissitudes that mark the gamester's progress, frequently wanting money to defray his common diurnal wants of the most pressing nature. Topham Beauclerc, himself a man of pleasure and of letters, who lived much in the society of Fox at that period of his life, used to

affirm that no man could form an idea of the extremities to which he had been driven, in order to raise money, after losing his last guinea at the faro-table. He has been reduced, for successive days, to such distress, as to be under the necessity of having recourse to the waiters of Brookes's Club to lend him assistance. The very chairmen, whom he was unable to pay, used to dun him for their arrears. All dignity of character and independence of mind must have been lost amidst these scenes of ruinous dissipation. He might be considered as an extinct volcano, for the pecuniary aliment that had fed the flame was long consumed.

Amongst the heiresses who at this time evinced their anxiety to engraft their plebeian stock on some sprig of nobility, was the celebrated Miss Johnstone, not less renowned for her wit than for the extent of her fortune. To this lady the Prince of Wales recommended Fox to offer his hand, but the latter was as ignorant of the road to gain a woman's love as an anchorite of the desert. There was a *brusquerie* in his manner, and an uncouthness in his general demeanour, which acted as repellents to the establishment of any permanent affection. In the Prince, however, Fox had a most powerful, and an almost irresistible advocate; and on one occasion, when his Royal Highness was pleading the cause of his friend, with the knowledge, at the same time, that Pitt had also shown some predilection for the lady, Miss Johnstone said, 'I am afraid, your Royal Highness, I should get into a pitfall if I were to marry Mr. Fox.'

'Perhaps that would be better,' said his Royal Highness, 'than falling into the arms of a Pitt.'

'Better, perhaps,' said Miss Johnstone, 'in the arms of a Pitt than in the claws of a Fox.'

The profligate character of Mr. Fox put an end to this treaty of marriage; and in a short time afterwards, during the celebrated trial of Hastings, Fox raised his eyes and his hopes to the Duke of Newcastle's box, in Westminster Hall, where usually sat Miss Pulteney, afterwards created by Mr. Pitt Countess of Bath in her own right, then justly esteemed one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom. After exhibiting his powers of oratory as a public man in the manager's box below,

he sometimes ascended in his private capacity to try the effect of his eloquence, under the character of a lover. The Prince of Wales and all his friends aided a cause which, by rendering Fox independent in his fortune, would have healed the wounds inflicted by his early indiscretions. General Fitzpatrick usually kept a place for him near the lady, and for some time the courtship assumed so auspicious an appearance, that Hare one day, speculating on the probable issue of the marriage, said with admirable humour, ‘that they would be inevitably duns, with black manes and tails,’ alluding to the lady’s fair complexion and red hair, contrasted with the dark hue of Mr. Fox. The affair, however, ultimately went off like the former, and Mr. Fox at length entered the married state with the Mrs. Armstead, of ci-devant notoriety.

From this lamentable period of the life of his Royal Highness we turn to one of the most important events of it—his connexion with Mrs. Fitzherbert.

This lady was a widow of great accomplishments and beauty, and was some years older than the Prince. She was, unquestionably, a most beautiful woman, but perhaps too much inclined to fulness of figure; and yet it may be said that she was indebted to that prominence of habit for a great portion of her personal loveliness and attraction. She was allied, on her father’s side, to Sir Edward Smythe, of Acton Burnel, in the county of Salop, and distantly related to the noble family of Sefton, in the kingdom of Ireland. The family of Smythe was of ancient origin in the county, and possessed all the pride common to those who can look far back to an illustrious and honourable ancestry. There cannot be any reason to suppose that Mrs. Fitzherbert was insensible to the distinctions of her family; and her education having been completed in France, this principle was not likely to lose its influence. Her first marriage was into one of the most wealthy families of the Roman Catholic religion in this kingdom; and, having been once the mistress of Lulworth Castle, belonging to the Weld family, was a circumstance of no small dignity to private life. Her second marriage, with Mr. Fitzherbert, of Swinnerton, in Staffordshire, continued her in that state of habitual importance which would effectually preserve her from being tempted



MRS FITZHERBERT.

Painted by P. Verelst, R. A. Engraved by G. Kneller

into any degradation of her character. The dowers and legacies of her different marriages qualified her to command all the elegancies of fashionable life ; and therefore it became the public opinion, that the relation in which she stood with the Prince of Wales could only be justified *to herself* by the solemnity of some engagement, or the sanction of some ceremony, whatever the nature of that ceremony may have been.

The first time that the Prince of Wales saw Mrs. Fitzherbert, was in Lady Sefton's box at the Opera ; and the novelty of her face, more than the brilliancy of her charms, had the usual effect of enamouring the Prince. But in this instance he had not to do with a raw inexperienced girl, but with an experienced dame, who had been twice a widow, and who consequently was not likely to surrender upon common terms. She looked forward to a more brilliant prospect which her ambition might artfully suggest, founded upon the feeble character of an amorous young Prince ; and when his Royal Highness first declared himself her admirer, she gave him not the slightest hope of success, but, in the true spirit of the finished coquette, she turned away from his protestations, and in order to avoid his importunities, quitted the kingdom, and took up her residence at Plombiers, in Lorrain, in France. The lovely idol knew that an object that is easily gained is seldom esteemed or prized ; the Prince, indeed, from his peculiar situation as heir-apparent, could not follow her, although it is stated, in an anonymous letter preserved in the British Museum, that his Royal Highness did once travel to Paris incog., and that he had there an interview with Mrs. Fitzherbert, the consequence of which was, her immediate return to England. As there is no other authority for this act of his Royal Highness, and taking the improbability of the event into consideration, it must be left with all the doubt attached to it, acknowledging, at the same time, that the preponderancy leans to the side of it being a fiction.

The residence of Mrs. Fitzherbert at Plombiers was not of long duration ; and in describing the cause of her removal, as it implicates the character of the lady in a most serious manner, we shall give it, without any comment, exactly as it appears in a pamphlet contained in the above-mentioned institution the writer of which professes to have been most intimately

acquainted with all the proceedings of Mrs. Fitzherbert during her residence on the Continent :—

‘ At Plombiers, Mrs. Fitzherbert contracted an intimacy with the Marquess de Bellois, acknowledged to be one of the handsomest men in France, with whom she withdrew for some time, and lived in the greatest familiarity. The consequence of this intercourse was the necessity of retiring to Paris, where, by means of two of her friends, the scandalous transaction was industriously concealed *.’

It was now known that the Prince had sent his emissaries to discover the residence of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and in order to prevent the above circumstance coming to the ears of the Prince, she was recommended by Mr. Bouverie, and Mr. Errington, her cousin, both of whom were afterwards present *at her marriage*, to return without loss of time to England.

In justice to the character of Mrs. Fitzherbert, we must admit that the whole of this transaction is strongly tinged with improbability; and yet it cannot be supposed that any person (although *ex-officio* informations might not then have been so much in fashion as at the present day) would have been bold enough to have promulgated so serious a charge against a lady then universally known to be the favourite of the Prince of Wales—by some supposed and by others *known* to be his wife—without having good and incontrovertible, and, if we may be allowed the expression, almost divine proofs to adduce for the truth of it. We found our opinion on the improbability of such a criminal intercourse having taken place between Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Marquess, on the ground, that although the former had absented herself from England, yet still that she had an eye to the heir-apparent to the crown of it; and it is not consistent with probability, that she would so far have compromised her character, and thereby have frustrated every hope which her ambition might have cherished, by the formation of a connexion, which would have rendered her rather an object of disgust than of affection to her royal lover.

We have given the facts as they are stated in the letter of

* In the letter of Nemesis to Alfred, the author, in a note, says, ‘ Does the author of Nemesis design to insinuate that Plombiers was unable to furnish a midwife, and other accommodations necessary for a lady obedient to the Divine command, “increase and multiply?” ’

Nemesis to Alfred, and in corroboration of the above statement, he subsequently says, ‘ In the winter of 1788 the Marquess of Bellois came to England, and became known to the Prince. Mrs. Fitzherbert, fearing a discovery, spoke of him as a man unworthy of the Prince’s acquaintance, which coming to the ears of the Marquess, he was so piqued, that he demanded the two thousand pounds which she had borrowed of him. She refused to pay him, unless he gave up her letters, with her notes of hand, which on his part was refused also. She then sent Anthony St. Leger and Weltjee (who, by the bye, although he filled the menial situation of cook in his Royal Highness’ establishment, appears to have been employed in some matters of a very delicate nature) to negotiate for her; and after much debating, by means of the Abbé Sechamp (of whom we shall have to speak hereafter) the matter was compromised for two hundred pounds, but the letters were not given up, some of which contained matter highly disgraceful to the Prince of Wales, and some of the secrets were afterwards divulged by her brother, Walter Smythe, whom she had ill-treated, but a stop was put to the promulgation of any further secrets on his part by a large sum of money. Immense sums were lavished on her in trinkets; and the expenses of puffing paragraphs in her favour, and of suppressing others against her, amounted to an enormous sum.

‘ Mrs. Fitzherbert was at this time said to be in correspondence in France with the Gros Abbé, the bastard brother of the Duke of Orleans, the Abbé Taylor, and some Irish friars in many parts of Italy. The aim of this correspondence was said to be to harass the existing administration, and to pave the way for the introduction of Catholics into Ireland.’

So far we quote from the letter of Nemesis; and that he was a person in a great degree acquainted with the private history of Mrs. Fitzherbert, cannot be questioned. One point, however, is considerably in his favour, which is, that his statements were never contradicted: on the contrary, the pamphlet was speedily withdrawn from circulation, and its existence is only known to those who have made the private history of our late monarch their particular study.

On the return of Mrs. Fitzherbert to this country, she found

the passion of her royal lover still burning with its former ardour, and such means were soon after employed as to make the lady no longer consider it a disgrace to acknowledge herself the object of it. The exterior of this connexion was evident to all the world, but the reality of it remained an enigma, which it was almost considered in vain to look to futurity to expound. That it was confirmed by any form of matrimony, was contradicted in the most authoritative manner by Mr. Fox, in his place in the House of Commons; but we shall be able to show that this denial of Mr. Fox was an act of the most urgent expediency: the very continuance of the government depended upon it—for had it been admitted, the Prince of Wales, according to the act of William III., could not have taken upon himself the Regency of the country, for the people, on account of his having married a Papist, were absolved from their allegiance; independently of which, that the heir-apparent or any other Prince of the blood should be privately married, was an event particularly guarded against by a celebrated act of Parliament, passed soon after the commencement of the reign of George III., commonly called the Royal Marriage Act, and which was enacted in consequence of the marriage of the Duke of Cumberland with Mrs. Horton, and the Duke of Gloucester with the Countess Waldegrave. By this act of Parliament it was declared that the descendants of George II. *, except the offspring of such of the Princes as were married to, or might marry foreign Princesses, were incapable of marrying till the age of five-and-twenty years, without his Majesty's consent previously obtained; or after the age of five-and-twenty, in the event of his Majesty's refusal, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament. The marriage, therefore, of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert, if it had ever taken place, was, in point of form, null and void; and in point of law, the children (if any had been born) of this marriage were illegitimate and incapable of inheritance.

* How little could Miss D'Olbreuse, a young French lady, perhaps of equal beauty and merit, but in no respect superior to, if of equal condition with Mrs. Fitzherbert—how little could she foresee, that a precedent would in no very distant time be attempted, for violating the dearest and most essential rights of mankind, in order to guard *her* posterity from such a marriage as that to which they owe their own existence! But such was the fact, for George the Second was himself the grandson of Miss D'Olbreuse.

But this was by no means the only circumstance in this delicate affair which made the greatest impression on the public mind, for the most serious sensation was excited when it was known that Mrs. Fitzherbert had been educated in the principles of the Roman Catholic religion. It was said, indeed, that she might have retracted those principles; but was that retraction, it was rejoined, even supposing it had been made, worthy to be believed? A close and secret investigation took place as to the character and principles of those who were her immediate associates, and they were all found to be members of the Roman Catholic community, and some of them actually belonging to that most dangerous and intriguing set of men, the Jesuits. Was this person, then, a proper associate for the heir-apparent to a Protestant throne?—Was it not a society fraught with the utmost danger to the religious faith of the future ruler of the nation? and, therefore, it cannot be urged as a fault, on the part of the people of this country, that the impression which this supposed marriage made upon their minds was deep and alarming. They saw, in their glances into futurity, every reason to expect the horrors of another civil war; and in their zeal for our civil and religious liberties, some of them were ready, in case of the demise of the crown, to have taken up arms against its natural successor, by way of antidote and precaution.

Amongst this number was Lord George Gordon, then under prosecution in the Court of King's Bench, for a libel on the Queen of France, and Count d'Adhemar, ambassador from the Court of Versailles, and who, on his trial, commented with great freedom on the connexion supposed to have taken place between Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Prince of Wales. On his being interrogated what particular motive he had for wishing to have the benefit of that lady's testimony, he replied, 'that he had a conversation with Mrs. Fitzherbert in Paris, relative to some intrigues of the French and British Courts, which he wished that lady to substantiate.' Previously to his trial, his Lordship called at Mrs. Fitzherbert's house, in order to serve a subpoena upon her, but he was turned out of doors by her servants. The newspapers of the day, advertng to this circumstance, observed, that Lord

George Gordon caused a letter to be delivered to Mr. Pitt, before he went to the house, acquainting him that he had received a visit from Mr. Walter Smythe, brother to Mrs. Fitzherbert, accompanied by Mr. Orton, threatening to call him to account if he went to Mrs. Fitzherbert's again, or took any liberties with her name: to this his Lordship made answer, that he must still apply to Mrs. Fitzherbert, to himself, or to Sir Carnaby Haggerston, until a written answer was sent concerning the just title of their sister. His Lordship thus concluded: 'I think it my duty to inform you, as Prime Minister, with this circumstance, that you may be apprized of, and communicate to the House of Commons, the overbearing disposition of the Papists.'

The uncompromising hatred which in the year 1780 had burst with such memorable and destructive zeal against the Catholics, now took fresh alarm; and, on the rumour of a marriage between the heir-apparent and a Catholic lady, probably would have flamed out into fresh excesses, equally pernicious and dangerous, had the spirit of the times been the same. But the dreadful riots of 1780, in which Lord George Gordon bore so conspicuous a part, and which were then fresh in every one's recollection, were too recent for the populace to be propelled by a similar cause to similar acts of violence. His Lordship had also lost much of his popularity by certain eccentricities in his behaviour, though he had not then embraced the Mosaic ritual, which nearly altogether alienated the attachment of his former adherents. But notwithstanding the disadvantages under which this once popular and formidable leader laboured, it is certain that the notice which he took of the connexion between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert caused that affair to be more particularly discussed than it would otherwise have been.

In the mean time there were not wanting many who believed, or who were willing to believe, that the marriage ceremony had been actually solemnized; and in the midst of this painful vacillation of the public opinion, appeared the celebrated pamphlet of Horne Tooke, in which he not only declared that the marriage did actually take place, but that he was acquainted with the name of the priest who performed the ceremony. He

also attempted to prove that the marriage itself was a nullity, and consequently that if Mrs. Fitzherbert were absolutely married to the Prince of Wales, she became *ipso facto* Princess of Wales, by which style Horne Tooke addresses her throughout the whole of the pamphlet.

This work, coming from a man of no slight vigour and subtlety of mind, caused a sensation in the country which cannot be described, and every expedient was resorted to which could check the circulation of such alarming intelligence. In regard to the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert, on the ground of her being a subject, it was contended that it was not fraught with any danger to the country, from the well-known facts of the different marriages which had taken place between the sovereign of the realm and a subject, and that such marriages never had been interrupted down to the very accession of the present family on the throne. Thus the two immediate predecessors of George I., as well as our great Elizabeth, were the issue of such a match; and not only they, but the house of Stuart itself, which immediately preceded the house of Hanover, and the very sovereign under whom the house of Hanover claims, are the issue of the sovereign with the subject. The race of Tudor, also, which immediately preceded that of Stuart, and the very sovereign under whom the house of Stuart claims, are also the issue of such a match. Three out of six sovereigns of the house of Stuart, and three out of five sovereigns of the house of Tudor were the issue of such matches; by which it appears that the majority, for the course of two hundred and thirty years, namely, six out of the eleven sovereigns immediately preceding the house of Hanover, were the issue of the sovereign with the subject.

It was not, however, to the marriage of the Prince with a subject that the people of this country appeared particularly to bend their attention, as the legislature had already provided for the nullity of such a union, but it was to the religion of one of the parties that they looked, and in this point of view it was considered an event of the greatest importance, beyond anything of the kind since the Revolution. It was the subject of discussion in all the courts of Europe, and in this country excited a sensation unparalleled in the extreme.

Every possible attempt was now made to call into discredit the statement of Horne Tooke; his 'Letter to a Friend,' in which the marriage of Mrs. Fitzherbert with the Prince was asserted, was very difficult to be procured; and his subsequent and very extraordinary silence, when he was publicly challenged to disclose the name of the priest, and the place where the ceremony was performed,—all tended, in a great degree, to calm the perturbed mind of the people, as they argued, that his silence betrayed that he had no real and substantial grounds for the strong assertions he had made. It belongs not to us to investigate the reasons of Horne Tooke for maintaining such a studied silence on a subject of such vital importance, and concerning which, if he had any proofs wherewith to confirm his statement, he could not have any good and valid grounds for concealment; on the contrary, from the well-known political sentiments of the man, he was considered as the very last who would screen the offending parties from the consequences of their illegal proceedings; or that, from any servile subserviency to the ministers of the day, or even to the Sovereign himself, he could have been induced to withhold any information which might tend to the ultimate benefit of the country. It was, therefore, rather a triumph for the Prince's party, that no explicit declaration was made, corroborative of the statement of Horne Tooke in his pamphlet; although, from the high and overbearing disposition, and the sudden change which took place in the manners and conduct of the immediate relations of Mrs. Fitzherbert, it was evident that they considered themselves as exalted in the scale of rank and importance; and certainly it was argued, that such a sudden accession of pride could not arise from the prostitution, but the elevation of their relative.

Amongst the immediate friends of the Prince, however, there were many who regarded his connexion with Mrs. Fitzherbert as an event rather to be rejoiced at than regretted, for however irregular it might have been in its nature, it had still a tendency to withdraw him from the disgraces, and preserve him from the consequences of vulgar debauchery.

Previously to the attachment of the Prince to Mrs. Fitzherbert, the passions, it was well known, treated him with as little

reserve as the meanest of their votaries ; and, under their influence, he was continually seen in those pavilions of Pleasure, where honour is not known, and female virtue for ever banished. It was, therefore, very fortunate for himself, and of course beneficial to the nation, if he could become stationary somewhere, and in particular with a person whose situation in life entitled her to every attention which the laws of his country would allow him to bestow. His exalted rank, as heir-apparent to the crown, prevented him from entering into those tender relations which are open to the meanest of his subjects ; and, although some fearful forebodings of the future might have afflicted certain melancholy and scrupulous spirits in the contemplation of this singular transaction, yet, as a mere abstract gratification of youthful passion, and divesting it of all influence on or interference with the affairs of government, it perhaps ought not to have been considered such a matter of great national concern as it was represented—nor perhaps would it have been, but for the indiscreet conduct of the Prince's party ; for when it was seized upon by them as the circumstance to bind the Prince more firmly to their views and interests, it then became a subject of more serious consideration. That this was the case is very evident, from the peculiar attentions which were paid to the lady by all the first families connected with the party ; nor should it be forgotten that many of those women of distinguished rank and character, such as the Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Bedford, and others of equal dignity, refused even to visit the Duchess of Cumberland, till the Prince of Wales favoured her with his countenance ; whilst they received Mrs. Fitzherbert not only with cordial kindness, but with formal honours. This arrangement, so generally known and observed, aided by a variety of artful insinuations, framed on purpose to steal on the public ear, gave a sanction to the opinion, that the Prince had bound himself in as irrevocable a manner to the lady as the operation of forms could effect. But when, in a parliamentary debate relative to the payment of the Prince's debts, the nature of this connexion was demanded, Mr. Fox repeated his declaration that no marriage had taken place, and every one was satisfied with that decla-

ration, until Mr. Sheridan rose to reprobate the inquiry, and to give an eulogium of the lady, which by no means harmonized with the information that had preceded it.

The contradictions of these two political friends and confidential adherents of the Prince were not easy to be reconciled. Mr. Fox had declared that a lady living with the Prince, to all exterior appearance, in the habits of matrimonial connexion, had not the sanction of any canonical forms to support her; whilst on the other hand, Mr. Sheridan reversed the picture, by representing her as a paragon of chastity, the possessor of every virtue and the ornament of her sex, who was injured by the suspicions introduced into parliament, and which had no foundation whatever but in the subservient fancies of ministerial adherents. Here, then, new difficulties arose respecting this once memorable but unfortunate woman, for she was now involved in the political arrangements and the views of the party, and was therefore to be supported by it; but, on the other hand, she was the object at which the ministerial party directed their most envenomed shafts.

In a letter addressed to Mrs. Fitzherbert at this time, as the Princess of Wales, of which Dr. Withers was the author, appeared the following energetic passage:—

‘When the once celebrated leader of the opposition presumed to sacrifice your Royal Highness to the interested views of the party, I was transported with indignation, because, from a situation the most honourable in the kingdom, it reduced you to a state of infamy and contempt. It proclaimed, in the face of day, and to the astonishment of the world, that a woman of birth, beauty, and independence, was the strumpet of the Prince of Wales, and under this head, I have no scale to measure your demerits. A poor disconsolate female, whom a villain has seduced, or the want of bread has driven to public prostitution, is an angel of innocence in contrast with Mrs. Fitzherbert.’

Mr. Fox, however, would not retract his assertion, nor would he give back the paper on which it was founded, to any solicitation. We shall be able, shortly, to show the Jesuitical grounds on which his disavowal of the marriage was founded;

and it does not speak much for the acuteness nor the penetration of the ministerial party, that they did not see through the nice distinction on which the disavowal was made.

Sophistry was, therefore, now the only resource which could preserve Mrs. Fitzherbert from that situation which is attended with irrevocable disgrace to the female character; and in consequence of this perplexing dilemma, the retainers of the party took no small pains to propagate an opinion, that the wisest and best of men are governed by circumstances, and that those of the Prince of Wales were peculiarly oppressive. His Royal Highness, they contended, who was excluded from the comforts of connubial life, by being prohibited from choosing a wife for himself, acted perfectly right in fixing on some one to supply her place; and if she were a woman of a previously irreproachable character, good family, elegant manners, and maintained her fidelity to him inviolate, the most exalted and respectable female characters in the kingdom were not only justified in receiving her, but would merit censure, if they should hesitate to treat her with the same respect as is due to married ladies of their own condition.

The flimsy texture of this argument was at once apparent to the meanest capacity; and it tended in a very great degree to the injury of Mrs. Fitzherbert's character, and to render the Prince of Wales unpopular. Nor did this obloquy attach to those individuals only, but it was bestowed on every lady of rank, who either visited Mrs. Fitzherbert, or was visited by her.

That the Prince of Wales was highly unpopular at this time may, in a great measure, be attributed to this mysterious connexion with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and to his avowed opposition to the measures of his father's ministers. The speculative mind, habituated to range with freedom, and to meditate without restraint on the events of life, will find, perhaps, as ample subject for grief and astonishment in the existing unpopularity of the Prince, as he may find for admiration in the popularity of the king his father. A Prince of Wales is placed by nature and by fortune in so high and favoured an eminence above mankind—all his actions, and his very excesses, are beheld through so deceptive, or so favourable a medium—he is environed by such a splendour, resulting from youth and royal dignity, and ex-

pectation of future virtues—that it requires no small deviation from all that can excite attachment, or lay claim to esteem, in order to divest himself, if not of the approbation, at least of the personal adherence, of the far greater part of those over whom he is one day probably destined to reign.

We would treat the errors and excesses of his Royal Highness as resulting more from the example of his profligate companions, than from any innately existing moral turpitude. Decorated as he was with all the grace of personal elegance, improved by education, cultivated by letters, enlarged by an acquaintance with men, not often attained by persons so far removed from the walks of private and common life; endowed with the powers of pleasing, and capacities of a convivial and social kind, not inferior to those so much admired in Charles II.; affable even to familiarity, addicted to the enjoyment of the table, and keenly susceptible of the charms of female beauty, and the seductions which accompany it—how, will the future historian ask, could a youth to whom Nature had been thus liberal, and on whom every eye was naturally turned with predilection and partiality, have contrived, before he had almost fully attained to manhood, to shake the affections, and to diminish, if not forfeit, the respect almost inseparable from his person and his dignity? It is an invidious, but it may be to future times a useful task, to explain *how* a Prince of Wales *may* degrade himself in the eyes of a deserving, a loyal, and an impartial people. If the following portraiture of the son of George III. be true in its prominent features, the manner in which he degraded himself is at once explained.

He may lay the foundation of this melancholy proof of his power by a departure from that sacred and primeval law written by the finger of Nature deeply in the human heart, of filial piety and obedience—a duty as inviolable, and as much exacted from the Prince to the Sovereign, as from the least and lowest subject to his parent; a virtue ever found to exist with the greatest force and energy in those bosoms where Nature has implanted all the most benign and kindly affections. He may accomplish that degradation by forming his nearest connexions of familiarity and intimacy, not from among the youth who naturally surround the successor to the throne, but

from the most obscure and unprincipled individuals with whom a capital such as London must of necessity teem. He may give the final wound to his popularity, and to the fond partiality of a great people, by forming a connection of so ambiguous, so enigmatical, and so undefined a nature, that mankind, with anxious but fearful eyes, shall tremble to explore what yet they desire to ascertain; and if this extraordinary union should be formed with a person of a religious persuasion different from that of the country in which so strange a scene is acted, it is then only to contempt and ridicule that he can fly, to avoid general disapprobation and resentment. These, and similar acts, are the means by which a Prince of Wales can descend from the proud eminence on which he is placed, by which he can compel a reluctant people to deprecate his reign, and to anticipate with terror that event to which they are usually prone to look with warm and pleasing expectation.

We have been told that Henry V., so dear to every lover of glory or of his country, emerged from a similar cloud which shaded and obscured him before he ascended the throne of England; but where is the pretended similarity between the conqueror of Agincourt and the son of George III.? Can the excesses of intemperance or levity, probably exaggerated to us by that magic pen which Shakspeare held, or however accurately true they may even be supposed, form any real resemblance between the two Princes? It is like the similarity which Burnet has ingeniously discovered between Charles II. and Tiberius, *only* consisting in their common attachment to the pleasures of women. In one other particular, the similarity will not stand good; Henry V. was a hero, but not a gentleman, associating with the greatest blackguards of the day;—George, Prince of Wales, was a gentleman of the most finished stamp, and might perhaps have been a hero if the opportunity had been allowed him; but the similarity will again hold good in the latter instance, for he also associated with some as consummate blackguards as his dissolute age could produce.

We have been led into these reflections by the true spirit of impartiality, which, although it may oblige us to represent the character of his Royal Highness in all its darker shades, yet, that whenever it can be done consistently with that indulgence

which is due to the imperfection of human nature, we may be allowed to throw over it that palliating hue, which may deprive some of his actions of the blackness of their atrocity. In the delineation of the character of every man, whatever his rank or station in life may be, a just and becoming regard should be paid to the peculiarity of the circumstances under which he may be placed, for it is a too common error to judge of another by the standard which we may have formed in our own minds of the right principles of action, at the same time that we are ignorant of the motives, which may have impelled the individual to the particular line of conduct which he may have adopted. In the majority, however, of the actions of the Prince of Wales, particularly in his intercourse with the female sex, no difficulty exists in the delineation of his character. The facts speak for themselves: he had but one general aim, and if that aim were attained, he did not seem to trouble himself about the propriety or the morality of the means which were employed for the purpose.

Before we return to the important subject of his marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, we will mention one or two circumstances which happened about this time, and which led his friends to suspect that their expectations, in regard to the good effects which were to emanate from his connection with that lady, were not built on any good foundation. To fix him to any object, however lovely and beautiful, appeared impracticable; it was a monotony of life insupportable to him, and he seemed to court variety with all the eagerness of a confirmed epicure at the luscious banquet. Not even the personal charms, nor the finished elegance of the manners of Mrs. Fitzherbert, could hold him within her chains, for their intercourse had scarcely commenced when his Royal Highness received an invitation to dine with one of the Sheriffs of London, a celebrated distiller in Whitechapel. The company was composed entirely of noblemen and gentlemen, the majority of whom were the intimate friends of his Royal Highness. The Sheriff's lady was one of the celebrated beauties of the east, being in her person of that *en bon point* which was so peculiarly the taste of his Royal Highness, and the features of her face were of that dignified and impressive cast, for which the Grecian beauties are so justly

celebrated. Her eye beamed with desire and passion, and her LIP was not the first TRAP which, by its lovely pouting, had ensnared the affection of the enamoured Prince. The lady left the table soon after dinner, and his Royal Highness felt a vacuum which could not be filled up by the coarser society of his companions. Feigning some excuse, he retired from the table, and the worthy Sheriff, fearing that the return of his Royal Highness might be delayed by indisposition, considered he should be wanting in respect if he did not hasten to make his personal inquiries respecting him. There were several places in the house to which it was possible that the Prince had retired, but there was one, in particular, in which it was highly improbable that he should be found, and that was the bed-chamber of his lady. It was, therefore, the last which the worthy Sheriff visited—but, had he visited it the first, it would have saved him a great deal of trouble, and calmed at once his anxiety for the safety of his royal guest. There, however, in reality, was the Prince found; and the Sheriff resolved on the most instantaneous punishment;—he drew his sword—and England would, perhaps, have had to mourn the loss of the heir-apparent to her throne, had not prudence whispered to him to save himself by the most precipitate flight. The darkness of the night favoured him, and he gained the garden; he heard his pursuers behind him, but no friendly door presented itself by which he could make his escape: in an instant he scaled the wall, and he now found the adage to be true, that a man should always look before he leaps. The Prince did not look; and therefore he leapt into as vile a compound of dirt and filth as ever received the body of a human being, much more that of a Prince, within its odoriferous bosom. In what manner the Prince regained his home, or into what hospitable dwelling he took refuge, to undergo the process of ablution, has not been communicated to us*. Associations are sometimes most rude and unpleasant monitors, and in after years, his Royal Highness never heard the name of Liptrap mentioned, but he exclaimed, in the words of Shakspeare,

‘ Oh ! but it has a rank, unearthly smell.’

* We are indebted for this anecdote to Mr. R——d, who was actually in the service of the Sheriff when the catastrophe took place, and who was one of the pursuers of the Prince when he fled into the garden.

It has been very inconsiderately and most erroneously stated, by the panegyrists of his Royal Highness, that in none of his amours he ever wounded the feelings of a father and a husband, but that he always selected those objects, whose virtue already stood on very suspicious grounds, and who, in the world of gallantry, were ready to yield themselves up to the highest bidder. It certainly would redound considerably to the character of his Royal Highness, and divest it of a great portion of that black atrocity with which it is at present accompanied, if these panegyrists had drawn their information from the fountain of truth, and not, by a wilful perversion of acknowledged facts, laid themselves under the imputation of being the disseminators of a statement of which falsehood is its chief constituent feature. To those, to whom it has been permitted even partially to lift the veil which has been industriously thrown over the early excesses of the Prince of Wales, numerous are the instances which present themselves of the most heartless attempts of his Royal Highness at the seduction of female innocence, some of which were too successful, and others were only frustrated by the removal of the intended victims from the influence of his contaminating society. In defiance, however, of these panegyrists, who, by their indiscreet eulogiums, have only thrown an additional odium on the character of him whose virtues they profess to admire, by challenging a scrutiny which it is very unable to bear, we could lead them to a very beautiful mansion, still standing on the northern side of Kew Green, which, before the rude and heartless spoiler broke into its sanctuary, was the abode of as perfect happiness as this sublunary scene can afford. We could shew them two doting and affectionate parents, watching over the rising beauty of their only child, and revelling in the prospect of her future establishment in life. We could shew them how they trembled if even a breath of air passed over her which might sully the purity of her maiden innocence, or inflict a spot on the angel whiteness of her bosom. We could shew them how that same lovely object, before the treacherous serpent polluted the chalice of her innocence, looked upon the world and found the world—a world of bliss to her; her wishes never straying beyond the precincts of her paternal mansion :

beloved by and loving only those who gave her birth—her sleep the sleep of innocence—her gaiety, the happiness of conscious virtue. We could shew them all this—and we could afterwards lead them to where those same parents are sitting in their now childless mansion—disconsolate and broken-hearted—the world a sickening desert to them; we could lead them to the tomb of their once idolized, now mouldering child, whose spirit was too pure to endure its weight of shame, or to support the scorn and contumely of the world. Her parents saw the roses gradually fading on her cheeks—the lustre of her eye getting dim and wan—the cherry freshness of her lips becoming pale and shrivelled—they saw the approach of death—their hearts sickened at the view, and in their morning and evening prayers, they implored the vengeance of heaven on the ruthless destroyer of their child.

To the indelible reproach of the female character, be it said, that in the ruin of this lovely girl, a woman was the principal agent; and when we mention the name of Lady Lade, we have given the synonyma for all that was vile and despicable in woman. This notorious female first beheld the light in Lukner's Lane, St. Giles', from which she emerged, on account of the fineness of her person, to become the mistress of John Rann, who forfeited his life on the scaffold at Tyburn, and, after passing through several gradations, she was taken under the protection of the late Duke of York. We therefore now behold her in her own box at the Opera, splendidly arrayed, her whole ambition gratified in viewing lords, dukes, and the princes of the blood at her side, paying that homage, which only superior virtue and attractive manners ought to exact. But it was in the Windsor Hunt that this lady first attracted the notice of the Prince of Wales. She was then the wife of Sir John Lade, and to be well up with the hounds—to be in at the death—to drive a phaeton four-in-hand, and to evince a perfect knowledge of all the technical phrases of coachmanship, not an individual in the whole hunt could compete with Lady Lade; nor was she excelled by even Sir John himself, who was the tutor of the Prince of Wales in the art of driving, and from whom he received a pension, *for his services*, of 400*l.* per annum.

Born in a lowly and obscure station, and too long kept back in a state of plebeian insignificance, she at once shone like the sun piercing through a cloud, so that the strongest eye was dazzled by the blaze. Her former haunts were totally forsaken—her former companions no longer remembered, and she shone a comet in the bright regions of taste and fashion. There were, however, some fastidious females, who still adhering to the musty prejudices of their forefathers, refused to acknowledge the resplendent attractions of this fair paragon, and who even persisted, notwithstanding the royal favour and protection of the Prince of Wales, to exclude her from their circles. In these moments of her indignation, at her prudish rejection by the stiff-starched nobility, she was apt to remember some of the phrases that she had learned in St. Giles', and whenever the Prince of Wales wanted an object of comparison in the vulgar practice of swearing, he was always wont to say, 'He swears like Letitia Lade.'

It was in the company of this woman, that the Prince of Wales, one day returning from the chace, met the beautiful Elizabeth Harrington walking on the Richmond road, in the company of her parents. She was immediately marked out as a new victim to his libidinous desires, and Lady Lade undertook to effect the introduction. It was under the pretence of sudden indisposition, that this female pander broke into the sanctuary of domestic happiness, and with so much difficulty was the task accompanied which she had to accomplish, that she at one time relinquished it, despairing of success. But the Prince had seen the luscious fruit, and to retire without the enjoyment of it, was at variance with his usual mode of action. He goaded on his emissary—he threw to the wind his vows of constancy and 'unalterable love' which he had sworn at the altar to HIS WIFE, and, like Cæsar of old, though on a far different occasion, he determined to realize the words *veni, vidi, vici*.

And here the dark traits of this heart-rending transaction begin to develop themselves. In all his preceding intrigues, we behold him acting under his genuine and royal character as the Prince of Wales. There had been hitherto no concealment,—no disguise, no fallacious hope of a permanent set-

tlement in life sanctioned by the laws, had been fraudulently held out. Hitherto he said with the great poet—

In my bright radiance and collateral light
Must you be comforted—not in my sphere.

On all former occasions he wooed as the Prince of Wales—and as such he conquered. The girl whose every heart-string quivered with passion for him, saw in him only the idol of her affection—the beloved—the irresistible conqueror of her virtue. It was to her the landmark—the *ultima thule* of her wishes, to be the acknowledged object of his love ; but in the present case, the announcement of a suitor in the person of the Prince of Wales would have been received with every mark of indignation and alarm. Every protestation of his *unalterable love* which he might have made in that quarter, would have betrayed the lurking motive ; and to some desert of the universe, untrodden by mortal foot, would the fond parents have removed their yet unsullied child, rather than have exposed her to the unequal contest which she would have to wage. Weakness, however, is inseparable from human nature, and one of the prevailing foibles of Mrs. Harrington was an attachment to aristocratical society. The possession of a title was a passport to her good favour, nor did she stoop to discover how it was acquired, whether by hereditary descent, although originating, perhaps, in infamy, or whether it was the immediate grant of the monarch for services rendered to the country. The honour of a visit from a lady of title, although purely *accidental*, was an event not to be superficially passed over in the calendar of her life, and this lady of title lauded her daughter to the skies as a paragon of beauty ; and where is the fond doting mother's heart that will not prompt her to throw her arms round the neck of the individual who lavishes her praises on an only, idolized child ? If there be a way to win a mother's heart, it is that ; not that we give the female pander sufficient credit for the possession of so much tact, or of such a consummate knowledge of the human character, as thus so skilfully to have seized upon the prevailing foible of the affectionate mother to effect her unhalloved purpose. It must also be allowed, that since the time when Lady Lade emerged, as Letitia Darby, from the purlieus of St. Giles', she had acquired what the French formerly

called the *bienséances* of society, although she could at any time shake them off, according to the grade of company into which she might be thrown. To the vain fancy of Mrs. Harrington, Lady Lade appeared as one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of fashion; and as she seldom opened her mouth without alluding to the terms of intimacy on which she stood with this or that duke, or this or that lord, it was a decided point with the infatuated mother that it was a very fortunate hour of her life when the sudden indisposition of her Ladyship impelled her to seek for relief under her hospitable roof.

The carriage of Lady Lade, drawn by four beautiful bay horses, and driven by herself, was now frequently to be seen standing at the door of Mrs. Harrington's house, for—

More than one steed Letitia's empire feels,
Who sits triumphant o'er the flying wheels;
And as she guides them through th' admiring throng,
With what an air she smacks the silken thong!
Graceful as John, she moderates the reins,
And whistles sweet her ——— strains;
Sesostris-like, such charioteers as these
May drive six harness'd monarchs, if they please.

Step by step did this titled demirep worm herself into the good opinion of this once happy family; but the eventful hour came at last, and the fragile vessel, freighted with all their earthly hopes, was wrecked for ever. The Harringtons were invited by her Ladyship to partake of a friendly dinner, and to accompany her afterwards to the Opera. The invitation was accepted; the dinner party was very select, there being only one *gentleman* visitor, but a more finished gentleman—one of more captivating manners and address, never graced a table. His attentions to Mrs. Harrington were of the most marked and affable nature; his attentions to her beautiful daughter, distant and reserved. The vanity of the mother was flattered—suspicion was laid asleep; and whilst she was sipping the palatable poison of adulation, Lady Lade was insidiously instilling into the ears of her unsuspecting victim the most exuberant praises of the personal graces and the manly virtues with which *the Honourable Mr. Elliott*, her visitor, was endowed. The female heart, unhacknied in the ways and stratagems of the

world, is too prone to receive a favourable impression, which, although scarcely felt at first, increases in force imperceptibly, until it becomes at last the very life-blood of its being, absorbing all other feelings into one—and that one is LOVE, in all its full, its blissful, heavenly power.

To the intriguing spirit of Lady Lade, who, it is well known, declared it to be her pride and glory to make any other female as infamous as herself, it must be attributed that the Prince of Wales, in this instance, assumed a fictitious name, for she soon perceived, that as the Prince of Wales, Mr. Harrington would not admit him as the companion of his daughter; as, independently of his exalted rank, which precluded all idea of a matrimonial connexion, his libertine excesses and his debaucheries were now the theme of general conversation in the fashionable coteries, and excited the deep regret of the more moral and virtuous part of the community. There was scarcely a newspaper published at this period which did not contain an account of some libertine act of *an illustrious individual*, or of losses sustained by him at the gaming-table; and it is a fact, for which there is the most undisputed authority, that in one week his name appears, for three consecutive nights, in the book of the night charges of St. Martin's watch-house, for riotous and disorderly conduct. His appearance in that character was always a source of great emolument to the guardians of the night, as they always made him pay a high price, not only for his own liberation, but also for that of his associates, who, on these occasions, were generally not only *sans soucie*, but also *sans sous*.

In this machination against the happiness of a worthy family, the intriguing party had nothing to fear but the recognition of the Prince; and for that reason he regretted that on account of a prior engagement, he could not accompany the party to the Opera, but that he would join them after it at the supper-table. It was here that the Prince of Wales was known to exhibit himself in all his irresistible power. The elegance of his manners—his sportive wit—his unbounded spirit of conviviality; the liveliness of his conversation, and the extraordinary facility with which he knew how to accommodate himself to the taste and pursuits of those by whom he was immediately

surrounded, all conspired to render him an object dangerous in the extreme to a female heart, and especially to one, who, having lived a life of comparative seclusion, sees itself at once thrown into a situation, where all that is fascinating and alluring operates upon the senses, and leads, as it were, all the affections captive.

To follow this amour through all its details would be to describe, on the one hand, all the arts and blandishments which the most confirmed libertine could employ to effect the conquest of female virtue; and on the other, the helpless contest, the unavailing efforts, the last expiring struggle of the writhing victim; it would be to depicture on the one hand, the heart-rending scene of the afflicted parents, as they followed their beloved but dishonoured child to the grave; and on the other, the heartless gaiety, and the reckless indifference with which the seducer looked upon the wreck that he had made.

And whilst these scenes were passing, the country was agitated to its remotest corner, by the firm belief that the marriage between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert had actually been consummated; and if one circumstance more than another tended to confirm that belief, it was the unreserved manner in which Mrs. Fitzherbert was received into the highest circles, and the blaze of splendour which surrounded her, not only when she appeared in public, but in the extravagant style in which she received her visiters at home. The veracity of Mr. Fox in regard to the disavowal of the marriage was exposed to the severest scrutiny, and the following passage in Horne Tooke's pamphlet, only tended to excite still greater alarm in the minds of the English people.

In his 'Letter to a Friend,' he says, 'You agree with me that it is not from the debates in either House of Parliament, that the public will receive any solid or useful information on a point of so much importance to the nation—to the sovereign on the throne—to his royal successor, and to the most amiable and justly-valued female character, whom I conclude to be in *all* respects both *legally*—really *worthily*, and *happily* for this country, HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

'After the conversation that has been held in the House of Commons, and published in the newspapers, together with the

discourse which has circulated universally through the nation, it would be a most ridiculous affectation to hesitate, in so many words, to declare, that it is reported, and by me on solid grounds believed, that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is married to the late Mrs. Fitzherbert, now his *lawful wife*.'

And in another passage, he says, 'I consider the disavowal of this marriage to be itself an additional slander on a much misunderstood, and misrepresented young man. I have no doubt, for he is young and a Prince, that some things might possibly be changed for the better in his conduct, but I will not believe at any time, and least of all in the moment and manner as reported, such a disavowal, be the marriage true or false, or any thing tending to lessen the character of the lady, could possibly be authorized by him. And although extremely disgusted with his politics, yet I have too much personal respect for Mr. Fox, to believe, upon the authority of a newspaper, that he was either the adviser, or silently seeming approver, much less the medium of such a disavowal. If such a measure had been thought advisable, or even necessary, upon any important score, yet Mr. Fox knows better how to time even his necessary measures. What! at the moment when the payment of debt and revenue were the questions, then to get up and make this disavowal, and then to give it the appearance of sacrificing, on compulsion, a defenceless woman's character, for so mean a consideration as a paltry sum of money: I will not believe it!'

The result of a strict analysis of the foregoing passage will be to shew, that there exists a very striking inconsistency in the arguments of the writer, compared with the boasted authenticity of his information, and it further shews, that he really was not so thoroughly acquainted with the secret machinery of the transaction as he professes to be. Horne Tooke, in his pamphlet, unequivocally states, that he knows the priest who officiated at the marriage; it is, therefore, not a little strange that he should be ignorant of the presence of some other individuals who graced the nuptial day with their presence; and still further, that he should take upon himself the defence of one of them, who, with the exception of the bride, and the illustrious bridegroom, was the most conspicuous character of

the party. Could he have been ignorant that Mr. Fox was himself present at the marriage, and that it actually took place in the very house occupied by that person in Grafton-street? If he knew that the Abbé Sechamp was the priest who performed the ceremony, why not openly avow it? why pretend a knowledge of the fact, and yet, from some unaccountable reasons, refuse to make it public, and, what was still worse, so to throw over it the cloak of mystery, as if he himself were the only depository of the secret? Was Tooke ignorant that Sheridan and Burke were both present at the marriage, and also Mr. Erington and Mr. Throgmorton, the immediate relations of the bride, and that Mr. Fox, the same individual who in his place in the House of Commons disavowed the marriage, was the very person who handed the bride into the carriage, when the *happy pair* set out for Richmond to spend *the honey-moon*? It is not the least surprising feature of this transaction, that Horne Tooke must have known that the disavowal of Fox was actually *true* and *false*, at the same time; and that the most consummate Jesuit, who ever in his monastic cell concocted a diabolical scheme to promote the interests of his party, could not have evinced more skill and cunning, than Fox evinced, in this memorable disavowal of a marriage, at which he himself was present. In order to prove the latter position, we will give an abstract from a celebrated pamphlet that appeared at this time, in which a committee are supposed to sit on the investigation of the marriage of the Prince, and the parties are regularly called in to give their evidence.

It begins with the evidence of Mr. Fox:—

‘ MR. FOX.

‘ It is requested of Mr. Fox that he would inform the committee on what authority he asserted in his place that Mrs. Fitzherbert is now a widow?

‘ Mr. F.—I beg leave to decline an answer.

‘ Does Mr. Fox consider that this committee is entitled to a clear, full, and satisfactory reply?

‘ Mr. F.—I have every respect imaginable for the committee, but I will not abuse the confidence placed in me.

‘ Mr. Fox may withdraw.

‘ MR. ST. OMERS.

‘ Does Mr. St. Omers know the minister who officiated at the marriage of Mrs. Fitzherbert with her present illustrious husband?

‘ St. O.—YES.

‘ In the opinion of Mr. St. Omers, were the rites duly performed and the union fully and effectually consummated?

‘ St. O.—Yes.

‘ On inspecting the table of disabilities as set forth by the church, is it the opinion of Mr. St. Omers that either of the parties laboured under ecclesiastical disqualification?

‘ St. O.—No.

‘ Will Mr. St. Omers be pleased to state to the committee his reasons for asserting in his place, that Mrs. Fitzherbert is a widow?

‘ St. O.—The marriage is good, according to *the decrees of the Church*, but of no force according to *Act of Parliament*.

‘ For what purpose, then, was the ceremony read?

‘ St. O.—TO QUIET THE LADY’S CONSCIENCE. Her FAVOURS were not to be obtained on any other terms.

‘ In the opinion of Mr. St. Omers, was it manly, was it honourable thus to impose on a woman of virtue?

‘ St. O.—I have nothing to do with other people’s opinions. I certainly knew it was all a FARCE; but her lover was impatient, and I approved of the scheme.

‘ Is not the lady attached to some of Mr. St. Omers party, and was it not expected that all her influence would be exerted to promote their cause?

‘ St. O.—The question is improper.

‘ Was there not a promise that the lover, on his accession to the Regency or the throne, would confirm the marriage?

‘ St. O.—Fox, I believe, told the lady something of the kind, but it was a mere expedient.

‘ In the opinion of Mr. St. Omers, have not such dishonourable transactions a tendency to lessen the power and destroy the popularity of princes—when the people of England are informed from such respectable authority, that a person of the first distinction is capable of such deliberate baseness to a defenceless female, will they not be fired with indignation? Will

they not hold the ministers and advisers of such treachery in the deepest detestation? Will it be in the power of venal panegyrists to do away the infamy?"

In one of the answers of Mr. St. Omers, is contained the whole germ of this memorable affair. He answers that the marriage is valid by the rites of *the church*, but not by *the law*, and it is behind this shield that Fox so artfully defended himself, as we shall have occasion hereafter to shew, when the question of the Prince's debts was agitated in the House of Commons, and whether the Prince of Wales was not actually disqualified from assuming the reins of government, in the character of Regent, on account of his marriage with a papist. Mr. Fox had the truth on his side, when he declared that the Prince was *not* married to Mrs. Fitzherbert, for in the eye of *the law*, and in the teeth of two existing acts of parliament his marriage with a papist was in reality a nullity; but if Mr. Fox had been asked in his place, whether the marriage was valid in the eye of *the church*, and whether it had not been consummated *in every respect*, according to the requisitions and the ordinances of the Roman Catholic Church, he must either have committed himself by the grossest falsehood, or he must have declared himself, and all those who were the abettors or the accessaries to the act of marriage, liable to the pains and penalties of a *præmunire*. But the denial of the marriage, in a political sense, was absolutely necessary, or the whole of the government would have been thrown into confusion; it was necessary, in a private point of view, as far as regarded the Prince of Wales, for the Commons demanded a decided disavowal of the marriage, before they would enter upon the question of the payment of his debts, which had now risen to an alarming amount, and the legal proceedings attendant upon them threatened to divest him of every portion of his personal property. In the acquiescence of the Prince, however, to give up Mrs. Fitzherbert, at the suggestion of his advisers, for a stipulated sum of money, the public read a trait in his character, which, considering the high sense of honour, and the exalted sentiments which he had displayed on some occasions, they were not prepared to behold. He was reminded of the reply of the half-civilized barbarian, Peter the Great of Russia, to his uncivilized

counsellors, to give up *a man not a woman*, to the extreme necessity of his situation. ‘No,’ replied the Prince, ‘I can resign my dominions even up to the walls of the metropolis, for in happier circumstances, they may hereafter be recovered, but the forfeiture of honour in a sovereign can never be retrieved.’

In the mean time, the manner in which Mrs. Fitzherbert was received in public, was an enigma which appeared to baffle every attempt at solution. Her marriage had been publicly disavowed; the House of Commons had expressed their satisfaction with such disavowal, and yet the public beheld in the train of this memorable woman, females of the highest character, and belonging to the most noble families of the kingdom. She had an establishment secondary only to royalty itself, and in some instances surpassing it. She had her maids of honour selected from the junior branches of the nobility—she had her ladies of the bed-chamber from some of the most exalted families of the country; the whole of the Prince’s party knelt at her shrine, as if she were the fountain of all honour and emolument—she was the presiding deity of the sphere in which she moved—and the thousands of satellites by whom she was surrounded, appeared to imbibe all their splendour and importance, accordingly as she condescended to let her light fall upon them. On the other hand, it was pertinently asked, ‘If Mrs. Fitzherbert is not the wife of the Prince of Wales—*what is she then?*’ and in regard to her reception in public, the following passage which appeared in the ‘*Courier de l’Europe*,’ excited considerable sensation, as it pronounced the opinion which was entertained in the foreign courts of Europe, on the existing relations between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert.

‘La fable du prétendu mariage de S. A. Mgr. le Prince de Galles a enfin été expliquée en plein Parlement de manière à ne plus laisser de doute. C’est une explication, qui est d’autant plus facheuse pour Mad. Fitzherbert que l’on a supposé des liens entre S. A. R. et cette dame, sur lesquels on n’avoit pas encore prononcé. Jusqu’ici Mad. Fitzherbert a été reçue dans toutes les sociétés, où étoit invité le Prince, *mais il ne sera guère possible aujourd’hui qu’elle jouisse des mêmes avantages*, à moins que cette première explication n’en entraîne une autre, et que la prétendue intimité de S. A. R.

ne soit présentée sous des couleurs *admissibles en bonne compagnie.** *

We are aware that we are rather anticipating the thread of our narrative, in the introduction of the following circumstance, but the links of the chain which compose this extraordinary transaction are, in some parts, so complicated and entangled, that we are obliged, in order to unravel them, and to account for their apparent confusion, to call in the aid of some future events, from which only a proper explanation can be obtained.

In the passage above quoted, Mrs. Fitzherbert read very distinctly the opinion which was held on the continent of her connexion with the Prince ; and that, consequently, under existing circumstances, she would not be received in the higher circles abroad with that respect and esteem which had hitherto been shewn to her. And herein we read the reasons of her refusal of the splendid offer which was made to her by the supposed authority of the King himself, of settling 20,000*l.* per annum on her during life, on condition that she retired to the continent, and broke off all connexion with the Prince. It was the wish of the nation that the Prince of Wales should marry, in order that the succession of the crown might be ensured ; but his infatuated connexion with Mrs. Fitzherbert appeared to stand as an insuperable obstacle in the way of his marriage, and, therefore, her removal out of the country was considered as the only means which could lead his Royal Highness to comply with the wishes of the nation, and particularly with those of the sovereign, his father, who viewed the relation in which the heir-apparent to his crown stood in regard to a Catholic lady, with feelings of the deepest anger and resentment.

The offer, however, of such a princely income was refused by

* The story of the supposed marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has at last been fully explained in the House of Commons, and in such a manner as to leave no further doubt on the subject. It is an explanation so much the more vexatious for Mrs. Fitzherbert, as a certain connexion has been supposed to exist between his Royal Highness and that lady, of the exact nature of which, no decisive information has transpired. Until now, Mrs. Fitzherbert has been received into every society to which the Prince has been invited, *but now it will be scarcely possible for her to enjoy those same advantages*, unless the explanation given in Parliament is not retracted by another, and which will exhibit the supposed connexion of his Royal Highness, in those colours, which will render it *sanc-tionable in the higher circles.*

Mrs. Fitzherbert on the ground that she was independent before her union with the Prince, and that a mere addition to her fortune should never induce her to break off a connexion on which the chief happiness of her life was founded.

Another attempt was, therefore, made to shake the resolution of the lady ; and this was, the offer of the rank of an English duchess ; but to this Mrs. Fitzherbert replied, that a rank of that kind, however exalted it might appear, would, were she to retire to the continent, operate rather to her disadvantage than to her favour. The mere possession of it, considering that she had not been, nor ever would be received as a duchess at the court of St. James', would not procure her admission into any of the continental courts, at which she would be regarded as rather the repudiated mistress of the Prince of Wales, than a lady of rank worthy to be received into the circles of the foreign nobility. Still there was *one* condition on which she might be induced to accept of the offers proposed to her ; but she knew well that it was a condition to which it was impossible to accede ; and that condition was, that her marriage with the Prince should be acknowledged, but that it was set aside on the grounds of its illegality. She should then be able to appear at the foreign courts with an unblemished character, which were the only amends that could be made for her forced expatriation, and the relinquishment of that society which was her only solace in the painful trials which she had undergone from the calumniating disposition of the world. That the Prince's party were at the bottom of this impracticable condition, may be at once perceived : the marriage of the Prince, according to the constitutional laws of the country, was not an event at all favourable to their views, although they were, at the same time, aware that it was an event in the serious contemplation of the sovereign, and that individuals were then actually employed at the courts of the Protestant princes of Germany, to point out an individual worthy to receive the hand of the heir apparent to the crown of England.

The manner in which these offers to Mrs. Fitzherbert were received by the Prince, may be gathered from the following discourse :—

In regard to the following scene, the authenticity of it may

perhaps be questioned by those who are ignorant of the manner in which the secret transactions of a royal palace, notwithstanding the vigilance that is used to prevent it, sometimes obtain publicity*. That it will be perused with intense interest, cannot for a moment be doubted; nor will the impression that it will leave on every mind in regard to the *honour* and veracity of certain individuals, who are implicated in the business, be easily effaced.

The Prince was one morning sitting in his cabinet, when Mrs. Fitzherbert was announced. She entered, holding in her hand a newspaper, which proved to be the *Morning Post*, of December 15th, 1788.

The Prince rose, advanced to meet her, and offered her his hand to conduct her to a seat, but she rejected it with disdain, and, throwing herself on the sofa, burst into a flood of tears. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of his Royal Highness. He entreated her, in the most tender and engaging accents, to disclose the cause of her uneasiness, that he might at least be allowed to share her distress, if it were beyond his power to remove it. Though relieved by tears, the conflict was too severe to be sustained by her tender frame: the contending passions triumphed, and she sank into the Prince's arms. Restoratives were immediately called for by the Prince, which were brought by one of the pages †, who was commanded immediately to retire.

* During the time that the *Memoirs of the Princess Charlotte*, and the *Life of George III.*, were passing through the press, I had several interviews with Sir Benjamin, now Lord Bloomfield, and the present Sir Frederic Watson, at Carlton House; and on my mentioning certain circumstances that had come to my knowledge respecting the former illustrious individual, Lord Bloomfield significantly asked me, by what means I had arrived at the knowledge of those facts—and after expressing his surprise at the extraordinary manner in which the subjects of his private conferences with the Prince Regent had sometimes transpired, his Lordship informed me, that he was one day closeted with his Royal Highness on business of great private importance, and that he was *certain* there was no one who could possibly overhear their conversation, as there were two rooms with double closed doors intervening between that in which they were sitting, and that in which the pages and other officers were in close attendance, 'and yet,' said he, 'to my utter astonishment, the subject of our conference was publicly known two days afterwards.' He finished by saying, 'that he never did believe in invisible agency—but if anything could prompt him to believe in it, it was that circumstance.'

† We do not exactly point to this Page as having been the instrument of this important conversation being made public, although it has been published that he concealed himself behind a screen for the purpose of overhearing it. A celebrated bookseller now living in St. James' Street can perhaps throw some light upon this business.

On recovery, Mrs. Fitzherbert appeared languid and unable to speak, and for what length of time she might have remained in that condition it were impossible to say, had not the Prince pressed her lips with fervour and effect. It was not the cold embrace of compliment—the kiss of wedded indifference, but the seal of attachment, the impression of a youth who had kept a lent of love.

‘And now, my dearest Fitzherbert,’ said the Prince, ‘whence arose this mighty commotion?—my heart informs me, that I merit not cold reserve. If love and constancy be virtues of estimation, I am entitled to a candid avowal, for, indeed, I love you with increasing ardour, and the power which terminates my attachment will stop my breath.’

The Prince enfolded her in his arms, and harmony was restored. Mrs. Fitzherbert placed in his hands the newspaper, and, smiling, asked him whether the provocation was not sufficient. His Royal Highness took the paper and read aloud:—

‘A very extraordinary circumstance has recently occurred, which will, probably, be the means of delaying, for some time, the final and complete arrangement of the intended *blue and buff* administration (the colours of Mr. Fox). This impediment originates with Mr. Fox; and were there not more of popular artifice than principle in it, it would be more honourable to his character than perhaps any part of his conduct that had before attracted public notice.

‘The memorable declaration of Mr. Fox, in the House of Commons, on the subject of a marriage between a certain great character and a lady well known in the higher circles, cannot but be fresh in the memory of almost every individual in the kingdom.

‘That connexion, on account of the difference in religious principles, appears to Mr. Fox fraught with probable mischief to his measures; he has, therefore, declared his positive resolution not to take any part in the intended new ministry, until the exact limits of that connexion are satisfactorily defined, as he has now reason to believe, that it is of a more *coercive* and *permanent* nature than he was once induced to imagine and announce.

‘To annul the grounds of Mr. Fox’s objection, no less a sum

than the annual allowance of 20,000*l.* has been offered to the lady, on condition of her retiring to the Continent. This the lady has positively refused; expressing her firm determination to abide by an authority that she is said to hold forth as unanswerable and inalienable.

‘A character*, who has lately started forth into oratorical consequence, is the negotiator in this important business, who, finding the lady obstinate, has offered, in addition to the enormous income above mentioned, the rank of an English duchess!!!

‘The lady, however, firmly resists all these alluring temptations, urging that she was in circumstances entirely independent previously to her being induced to coincide with that condition from which she is resolute not to recede, as character is of much greater importance to her than affluence, however abundant, if attended with the deprivation of that rank to which *she holds herself entitled.*’

The Prince, having finished the perusal of the passage, threw down the paper with indignation, exclaiming, ‘And do you suppose that I am within the possibility of countenancing an action so infamous in its principle, and disgraceful in its consequences?—do you believe me to be so superlatively wicked as to drive that woman to whom I have been so solemnly pledged *at the altar*, to a miserable exile:—so barbarous, so abandoned, as to sacrifice her to the wretched pageantry of a court? What have you ever witnessed in my conduct to justify the bare suggestion? I hope my heart is animated by nobler views—by more exalted sentiments: *it is I, Madam, who have reason to complain!*’

His Royal Highness pronounced the last period with an emphasis that alarmed Mrs. Fitzherbert, and she instantly replied,—‘Forgive the weakness of my sex; I dreaded lest approaching greatness should make my George unmindful of his vows—I did not attribute the brutal outrage to your directions. There is no suffering that I would not encounter with fortitude to serve you, and of that, I think, I have given sufficient proof already.’

* We suppose that Mr. Rolle is here alluded to, who was afterwards elevated to a peerage in consequence of his conduct in this important affair.

The Prince, in a tone of dignity and tenderness, requested to be informed to what instance of experienced suffering she alluded—

‘*To my silent acquiescence in Mr. Fox’s denial of our union.*’

‘My dear Fitzherbert,’ said the Prince, seizing her hand, ‘must I reiterate my solemn asseveration? Am I unworthy of credit? Once more then I protest, by all that is dear and sacred, that Fox’s denial of our union was without my concurrence—without even my knowledge.’

‘And did Sheridan and Burke act without your authority?’

‘On my honour they did,’ answered his Highness: ‘do you conceive that I would sacrifice a defenceless female, and that female the partner of my bed, and the sovereign of my affections, for money? Perdition seize the idea! I informed you, long ago, of the true motives of Fox’s conduct. I stood engaged for numerous sums; 10,000*l.* to ———, 36,000*l.* to ———, 9,000*l.* to ———, beside 70,000*l.* on bond, and innumerable lesser sums, with weighty arrears to my tradesmen and household. Now, Fox was apprized of the scrupulous economy of the county members; he was also alarmed at an opinion in circulation that the Protestant cause was in danger from my marriage with a Papist; and, for sundry other reasons, which he stated in his apology at Carlton-house, he deemed it conclusive to my interest to declare that the report of our marriage originated in treason and falsehood.’

‘And the denial of that marriage,’ said Mrs. Fitzherbert, ‘indisputably originated in the personal interests of Fox and his associates? I am confounded at his assurance. May Heaven, in its mercy, protect the kingdom from his intrigues. Illustrious depravity! It is impossible to pay a tribute to his abilities without doing violence to his honour. Every compliment to his *head* is a tacit accumulation of infamy on his *heart*.’

‘Give me leave,’ said the Prince, ‘to extenuate the criminality of my denial as far as it respects any intention of ultimate injustice to you. Fox knew that the union had been properly solemnized. He was present, and so was Burke. He knew also, that it was my determination, on acceding to the throne, to repeat the ceremony necessary to your coronation; hence he fancied it would be better on the whole to take refuge

in the expedient which has so justly offended you, for admitting in candour that he was influenced by the best intentions in the world; he ought certainly to have consulted me on the occasion, and I trust you will do me the justice to believe that I should not have forgotten your happiness and my own honour if I had been doomed in consequence to the income of a private gentleman for life.'

'I have never,' said Mrs. Fitzherbert, 'given attention to a single thought unfavourable to your disinterested magnanimity; but I confess, I have my fears of becoming an object of popular abhorrence on the ground of religion.'

'It is impossible, my dear Fitzherbert,' said the Prince, 'to control the multitude by argument—I mean in matters of devotion; but it will be laughable enough if either you or I incur censure for a predilection to any particular system of faith. We might reasonably have expected long ago to be traduced for impiety, for I believe, Fitzherbert, you have not been at mass since our union.'

'No,' replied Mrs. Fitzherbert, 'nor do I purpose to attend the celebration any more: the Catholic faith was the religion of my ancestors, and of those men to whom I gave my hand; and I conceive it to be cruel in the extreme to reproach me for conforming to practices in which I was educated, and which coincided with the devotional sentiments of my dearest friendships. I am now in a new relation of life, and disposed to consult the honour and happiness of my present connexions; and on this occasion, I conceive that my duty and my interest flow in the same channel. Not that religion is a matter of indifference—far from it. It is the *heart* which constitutes the essence of true religion: without it ceremonies are absurd, and with it they are unnecessary; at least they form so unimportant a part of public and private devotion, that I can conscientiously conform, and I will conform, to the established modes of the realm. Besides, I have no present objection to share my George's fate in future life; the idea of a separation, even there, is painful.'

The Prince smiled, and returned the compliment with a kiss; and then said, 'I entreat you, my love, make yourself perfectly easy as to anything else. I am at liberty to marry

whom I please, when regent or sovereign; and if I offer my hand to any other woman on earth, may the resentment of mankind record my infamy, and make it immortal!

* * * * *

A very erroneous idea has gone abroad respecting the privity of Mr. Fox to the marriage of his Royal Highness, and it has been stated by a contemporary that Mr. Fox was actually duped into a denial of the marriage, by a letter from the Prince himself, and that Mr. Fox never forgave the falsehood which had been practised on him; and further, that his Royal Highness never could prevail upon himself to forgive Mr. Fox *for having so much to pardon*. Now, the real state of the case is, that the only, and greatest dupe, in the whole affair was John Bull himself; in every word that Fox uttered, tending to deny the marriage, he was making a dupe of the English nation, and although he was bold enough to declare that he had a letter from the Prince himself, disavowing the marriage, no one ever saw nor read it, but Fox himself; the fact was, that no such letter was ever written, and when Fox was pressed by the opposite party to produce so important a document, he sheltered himself behind the plea of breach of confidence,—that it would be a stain upon his honour to deliver it up, and that it was an insult tacitly offered to him even to suspect him of so reprehensible an act. The supposed existence, however of such a letter tended, in a great degree, to allay the ferment, and to confirm the belief that the marriage of the parties was a story vamped up for some political purpose, and had been circulated by the enemies of the Prince to injure him in the estimation of the country.

It is, however, certain that the conduct of Fox was regarded by Mrs. Fitzherbert with the highest marks of her displeasure; and it may also be stated that it operated in some degree to establish a coolness between his Royal Highness and herself on the grounds of some lurking suspicion that the disavowal of the marriage by Fox was sanctioned by the Prince, and therefore she could not look upon herself in any other light than as a victim to the views of an interested and deeply designing party.

Mrs. Fitzherbert was at this time living in a mansion in Park Lane, which was furnished by the Prince in a style ex-

ceeding oriental magnificence. The Prince's presents to her of jewellery, of which we shall have to speak hereafter, were said even to exceed the stores of diamonds possessed by the Queen herself, avowedly the greatest collection of diamonds in Europe, and to whom the King had given, on one occasion alone, a case of those precious stones which cost 50,000*l*. The Queen, however, had received sets of diamonds as presents from Warren Hastings, from the Nabob of Arcot, and from the Nizam, and it is certain that Mrs. Fitzherbert's diamonds could not have equalled these. It is, however, unquestionably true that these extravagant presents to Mrs. Fitzherbert, and to some other ladies for whose favour the Prince was a candidate, tended to involve him in those pecuniary embarrassments which ultimately brought upon him disgrace and ruin.

Here we might close our allusion to this memorable affair with a consciousness, on our own parts, that we had not said too much, and that there are many who would pardon us for abstaining from further observations, as some of the actors in this drama are still living; but there remains unfortunately a task to be executed which it were disgraceful and pusillanimous to evade. Kings nor princes cannot be viewed in all, or in their most important phases, by regarding them only on horseback, or in the camp, or in robes of state, or at the council board.

There is a moral no less than a political influence which a monarch seldom fails to exercise over his people. Apart from prerogatives and political institutions, kings reign over society in their persons and their habits, as they do by their ministers over the state itself. Neither a sovereign on the throne, nor a prince in his palace, can enjoy an exemption from the first law of his regal existence, which places him on high for a constant spectacle and frequent model to others; nor can he grant to his subjects a license to free themselves from the fetters of sympathy and imitation, cast over them by the unavoidable ascendancy, whether it be for evil or for good, of that court of which he forms the inspiring and moving power.

The qualities of individuals concern chiefly themselves and their connexions; an ordinary gentleman may have private virtues or vices, and he and they find refuge and oblivion in



CHARLES JAMES FOX.

Charles James Fox

Engraved by W. Kelly, from an original drawing in the possession of the Lord & Mrs. Fox.

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the grave. But a king has no private character, he is all 'matter of record;' he acts incessantly on the manners or morals of his subjects; all his proceedings affect the tastes or principles of the community in a degree of which the precedents established by other men, are altogether incapable. Of a king, therefore, there is nothing sacred but his person, for we have a right to speak of those things of which we feel, and trace the results upon our own best interests. A king, in the truest sense, belongs to history, and his name and reputation fall within its stern grasp from the hour at which the tomb receives his ashes.

If it be alleged against us, that by exposing the vices of a king we are bringing the individual into contempt, we answer that we are not conversant with any law, moral, political, or divine, which imposes upon us the obligation to select only the bright parts in the delineation of the character of an English Prince, and to be so imbued with a false spirit of charity and forbearance as to huddle all his vices into the back-ground, that neither their extent nor their heinousness can be distinguished. A slavish adherence to such a system of partiality may suit the latitude of Madrid or Constantinople, but to an Englishman, his Prince is a part of his political property, and he becomes the object either of his approbation or his reproach, accordingly as he exhibits himself the votary of virtue or the follower of vice; he possesses the natural right, which is a part of his political inheritance, of passing his strictures upon the actions of his rulers: and although a sense of delicacy may restrain him, during the lifetime of his prince, from an exposure of his errors, yet he no sooner becomes the tenant of a tomb, than history steps in, and claims him as her own, and treats him as the meanest peasant of the land.

If we consult the chronicles of our country, we shall find that the tone of the people's mind generally harmonizes with the character of the ruling monarch. The strenuous and elevated character of Elizabeth formed the minds of her admiring subjects for deep reflection and vigorous action. That of James, so far as it had any influence, imbued them with his own appetite for solemn littleness, and the display of learning drawn from books, however indiscriminate and unprofitable. Charles II., by a course of audacious and systematic profligacy

gacy, transplanted into England every foreign vice. George I. and II. were strangers in the heart of England; and she was little disturbed by their intrusion, or wrought upon by the coarse and vulgar stupidity of their vices.

George III. was an Englishman, and was a part, and no mean part of the nation. He made an early and happy marriage with a virtuous woman; and his court and family were moulded, as nearly as circumstances would admit of, upon the model of a private, but noble house. The decorum and graces of a domestic life surrounded their whole establishment. Husband and wife were seen everywhere together, and, attended by their children, were seen frequently and familiarly, without churlishness or insolence, or air of exclusion, by the poorest subjects of George III.; while the good-humoured ease and simplicity of the King's deportment—his regular habits and punctual attention to ordinary duties—his love of rural scenes, and sports, and business—his affable and kindly manners—his unostentatious, but well-judged and extensive charities—his manifest consciousness that he and his countrymen belonged to each other, and were governed by common tastes and feelings, obtained for George III. a universal access to the hearts of the people, and reciprocally influenced the farmer's fireside and the royal palace.

If we direct our view to his successor, how strong, how painful is the contrast! We have seen that George Prince of Wales was an intelligent and high-spirited boy, and too soon discovered that he was heir-apparent to the crown of England. The authority of his father, exercised over him with strictness in his childhood, relaxed of necessity as he advanced in years; but vicious flatterers—those vultures whose prey is the heart of Princes—lay in wait for the adventurer as he quitted the paternal roof, and launched his young bark upon the world.

We may now record, from the authority of an individual familiar with the subject on which he bore witness, the assertion—the disgraceful and provoking assertion, although, undoubtedly, it was meant as a screen to something, if possible, still worse—that neither the Prince of Wales nor the Duke of York *could ever be made to comprehend the value of money*; the difference, as it was insinuated, between pounds, shillings, and

pence! If so, both brothers must have been deficient in the most ordinary powers of intellect, which, as to one of them at least, is known to be an egregious error.

If it were intended to establish the fact, that neither of these Princes had ever been made conversant with the means through which money is lawfully procured, or with the uses to which it ought to be directed, the defect is unhappily too common to be incredible, in relation to persons of a rank so elevated that they need not labour for their bread.

Let the cause, however, be what it may, the Prince of Wales soon acquired, if not an appetite for wasting money, a habit of prodigality the most reckless, incessant, and unbounded; nor has the country ceased to feel to this hour the effects of an indifference to the sufferings of others, little creditable in him who so frequently aggravated or produced them.

To the last years of his existence this woful spirit of waste and prodigality possessed the subject of the present memoir. As Prince of Wales, in the tawdry childishness of Carlton Palace, and in the mountebank Pavilion, or cluster of pagodas, at Brighton, his Royal Highness afforded an infallible earnest of what might one day be expected from him as a king, when the appetite for profusion, and the contempt for all that deserves the name of architecture, should have reached their full maturity and perfection.

If the court of George III. had a powerful influence in maintaining the decencies of social intercourse through England; if his virtuous Queen, by her resolute contempt for vice, and rigorous exclusion of female profligates from her presence, did actually cover the cause of the adulteress with authorized and merited scorn; thereby awarding to female chastity that worldly honour, which, next to religion and her husband's and children's love, is the surest guard of the matron's virtue; if such were the respective meeds afforded at the court of George III. to worth and to impurity, it must be painful to us to speak of the opposite system which prevailed notoriously during the reign of his successor.

It might sound sarcastic or ironical to pretend that the associates of George IV. were selected by that Prince from a manly confidence in his own capacity for repelling vice, and resisting

the temptations of the profligate. He may, indeed, have felt that confidence; but rugged must have been the virtue which could have justified such perpetual exposure. We do not wish to press hard upon the weakness of human nature, nor insist on it as an argument so much of anger as of sorrow, that the Prince of Wales, before his twentieth year, was supposed to have been initiated in all the vices by which an advanced, and affluent, and corrupt society is infested.

We do not complain with a too morose rigidity that the gaming-table, which exhausts the most immeasurable resources, and which creates and feeds the vilest and most hateful passions, was familiar to the youthful Prince. His Royal Highness could throw off, and did successively, all the companions of his earlier years, except, perhaps, those habits of life which are the sole, but brief and precarious bond of such immoral intercourse.

The Prince of Wales had many generations of intimates, with whom he led a course of life, the character of which rose little higher than that of animal indulgence. The royal taste, in the choice of male companions, usually exhibited its changes at the same periods which marked the transfer of his more particular attentions from one fair favourite to a rival. But never, we lament to say, except in the instance of Lord Moira, with whom the friendship was of the holyday kind—showy, not solid; and in that of Sheridan, where the alliance was a traffic of dexterous and familiar service against the hopes of patronage; never have we seen recorded amongst the Prince's *intimates*, the name of one man distinguished in the world for any intellectual attributes; we say nothing of the moral, which it would not have been charity to forget.

That the immense losses which the Prince of Wales sustained at the gaming table were not always the consequence of a run of ill luck, may be easily conjectured. Scheme after scheme was devised by which a heavy drain was to be made upon his finances; and he became eventually the dupe of a set of titled sharpers, who fattened on his credulity, and who, by acts of the most deliberate villainy, reduced him to a state of comparative pauperism. As a proof of the inventive spirit of these associates of the Prince, we have only to mention the

celebrated wager between the turkies and the geese; which emanated from the prolific head of George Hanger, and on the issue of which the Prince found himself minus several thousand pounds. During one of the convivial parties at Carlton House, George Hanger designedly introduced the subject of the travelling qualifications of the turkey and the goose; and he pronounced it as his opinion (although directly contrary to his real one), that the turkey would outstrip the goose. The Prince, who placed great reliance on the judgment of George Hanger, on subjects of that nature, backed the opinion of Hanger; and, as it may be supposed, there were some of the party who were willing to espouse the part of the goose; the dispute ended in the Prince making a match of twenty turkies against twenty geese, for a distance of ten miles—the competitors to start at four o'clock in the afternoon. The race was to be run for 500*l.*; and as George Hanger and the turkey party hesitated not to lay two to one in favour of their bird, the Prince did the same to a considerable amount, not in the least suspecting that the whole was a deep-laid plan to extract a sum of money from his pockets, for his chance of winning, from the natural propensity of the turkey, was wholly out of the question. The Prince took great interest in this extraordinary wager, and deputed George Hanger to select twenty of the most wholesome and high-feathered birds which could be procured; and, on the day appointed, the Prince and his party of turkies, and Mr. Berkeley and his party of geese, set off to decide the match. For the first three hours, every thing seemed to indicate that the turkies would be the winners, as they were then two miles in advance of the geese; but as night came on, the turkies began to stretch out their necks towards the branches of the trees which lined the sides of the road: in vain the Prince attempted to urge them on with his pole, to which a bit of red cloth was attached; in vain George Hanger dislodged one from its roosting-place, before he saw three or four others comfortably perching amongst the branches—in vain was the barley strewn upon the road, no art, no stratagem, no compulsion, could prevent them taking to their roosting-place; whilst, in the mean time, the geese came waddling on, and in a short time passed the turkey party, who were all busy in the trees dislodging their obstinate birds; but as to any further

progress, it was found impossible, and the geese were declared the winners.

Trifling as this circumstance may appear, it will have the tendency of exposing the characters of the intimates of the Prince of Wales, and the singular expedients to which they had recourse, to restore their shattered fortunes, at the expense of his character and his fortune.

Connected with this period of his Royal Highness' life, many stories have been told of sallies of conduct, of various features of character—some distinguished by their extreme eccentricity, and others by those wanton deviations from the strict line of morality, which however may be said less or more of every youth of high expectations or great possessions. His Royal Highness was fond of seeing society in its various grades, and, like his prototype of old, Henry V., sometimes went *incog.* to places; where his presence was least expected. A public house in Gray's-inn-lane had become, in some degree, celebrated for its Burton ale; and the Prince of Wales wishing to taste it, took with him the then Groom of the Stole, the first Lord Southampton, and, walking into the house, they called for some Burton ale. After they had sitten, however, for a short time, some one recognised the Prince of Wales. The Prince, finding he was discovered, abruptly departed with Lord Southampton, and, taking a hackney-coach, they returned to Carlton House. The neighbours were a few days afterwards surprised by the Prince's crest being splendidly put up at the public house alluded to, with the inscription of 'Purveyor of Burton Ale to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales;' the landlord of the house so describing himself in consequence of the royal visit.

The following anecdote is rather of a different and more pleasing nature, as it gives us some insight into the liberality and generosity of his Royal Highness, although at the same time it must be stated, that its publicity at the time exposed the Prince to some obloquy, as it was urged by his creditors, who were beginning to be exceedingly clamorous for the liquidation of their debts, that he should be just before he was generous. Thus, even if there be a good action sometimes committed, there are not wanting those carping spirits who will find a flaw in it, on the same principle that they complain that the sun has its spots and shades.

The Prince was one day so exceedingly urgent to have 800*l.*, at an hour on such a day, and in so unusual a manner, that the gentleman who furnished the supply had some curiosity to know for what purpose it was obtained. On inquiry he was informed that the moment the money arrived, the Prince drew on a pair of boots, pulled off his coat and waistcoat, slipped on a plain morning frock, without a star, and, turning his hair to the crown of his head, put on a slouched hat, and thus walked out. This intelligence raised still greater curiosity, and with some trouble the gentleman discovered the object of the mysterious visit. An officer of the army had just arrived from America, with a wife and six children, in such low circumstances, that, to satisfy some clamorous creditor, he was on the point of selling his commission, to the utter ruin of his family. The Prince, by accident, overheard an account of the case. To prevent a worthy soldier suffering, he procured the money, and, that no mistake might happen, carried it himself. On asking at an obscure lodging-house, in a court near Covent Garden, for one of the inmates, he was shown up to his room, and there found the family in the utmost distress. Shocked at the sight, he not only presented the money, but told the officer to apply to Colonel Lake, living in ——— street, and give some account of himself in future; saying which, he departed, without the family knowing to whom they were obliged.

The pecuniary embarrassments of the Prince now pressed heavily upon him. The rebuilding of Carlton House, and the sumptuous decoration of the Pavilion, with a crowd of gay and profligate associates, could not fail to involve the Prince in debts, to the discharge of which his slender income was far from adequate. It was, to use Shenstone's simile, a large retinue upon a small income, which, like a cascade upon a small stream, tended to discover its tenuity. His Royal Highness' style of living was splendid beyond a precedent, his stud was the finest in Europe, but the exact reverse of profitable; and his losses at the gaming-table were reported to be immense. His debts amounted to nearly 300,000*l.*, and as his creditors became very importunate, he laid his case before the King, and solicited relief. A schedule of the Prince's debts was, by the King's command, soon laid before him; but whatever might

have been the nature of that document, some of the items were so inconsistent with the strictly moral principles of George III., that the negotiation ended in his positive refusal to assist the Prince, and the heir-apparent gained nothing by his application but the unequivocal displeasure of the King. One of the items of this schedule was a debt due to Mr. Jefferys, the jeweller, for jewels and plate furnished to Mrs. Fitzherbert, to the amount of 54,000*l*.

The haughty indifference of the monarch and the minister, to the pressing claims of the Prince, threw him entirely on the sympathy of the Opposition. Mr. Pitt identified himself with the obstinacy of the father, while Mr. Fox and the Opposition connected themselves with the irregularities of the son. One evil consequence that was on the point of resulting from the embarrassments of the Prince, was his acceptance of a loan which the Duke of Orleans proffered him, and which would have the perilous tendency of placing the future sovereign of England in a state of dependence, as a creditor on a Prince of France.

The secrets of the loan may be estimated by the fact, that the Duke agreed with the Prince, that he was to receive a certain sum, on his (the Prince's) coming to the throne. The nominees of the Duke were two profligate females. This transaction, unequalled since the days of Charles II., put every party to great difficulties; and the friends of the King and the Prince were equally anxious to prevent the loan taking place, or being known to the public. The Prince was deeply in debt to many English noblemen, but they concealed the fact with great delicacy, whilst the Duke of Orleans, prompted by the vanity so natural to his nation, had industriously circulated the report about the English Prince being about to borrow money of him. The two women who were to receive the Prince's bond of payment at his father's death, gloried in circulating amongst the profligate coteries of the French court the degrading obligations which their paramour had imposed on the English crown.

The Duke of Portland, as the friend of the King, was zealous in stopping the transaction. On the 13th of December, 1786, he writes to Mr. Sheridan: 'I have received a confirmation of the intelligence; the particulars varied in no respect

from those I related to you, except in the addition of a pension, which is to take place immediately on the event which entitles the creditors to payment, and is to be granted for life to a nominee of the Duke of Orleans. The loan was mentioned in a mixed company by two of the Frenchwomen and a Frenchman, in Calonne's presence (then minister of finance), who begged them, for God's sake, not to talk of it. I am going to Bulstrode, but will return at a moment's notice, if I can be of the least use in getting rid of this odious engagement,' &c.

Mr. Pitt was as pertinacious as the King in refusing any aid to the Prince, who was driven to more mortifying expedients for money than had ever befallen a royal personage. The following account, given in Jefferys' own words, will exhibit the degraded state to which he, at this time, was reduced for money.

'The Prince sent for me to Carlton House, at a much earlier hour in the morning than he was accustomed to do, and, taking me into an inner apartment, with very visible marks of agitation in his countenance and manner, said, he had a great favour to ask of me, which, if I could accomplish, would be doing him the greatest service, and he should ever consider it accordingly. I replied, that I feared what his Royal Highness might consider a great favour done towards him, would be more than my limited means could accomplish; but that in all I could do I was entirely at his service, and requested his Royal Highness to name his commands.

'His Royal Highness then proceeded to state that a creditor of Mrs. Fitzherbert had made a very peremptory demand for the payment of about 1,600*l.*; that Mr. Weltjee had been sent by his Royal Highness to the creditor making such demand, to desire it might be placed to the Prince's account. This, however, the creditor refused to do, on the ground that Mrs. Fitzherbert, being a woman of no rank nor consideration in the eye of the law, as to personal privilege, was amenable to an immediate process, which was not the case with his Royal Highness. This the Prince stated to have caused in his mind the greatest uneasiness, for fear of the consequences that might ensue, as it was not in the power of his Royal Highness to pay the money then, or to name an earlier period for so doing than three or

four months. The request, therefore, which his Royal Highness had to make to me was,—that I would interfere on the occasion, and prevent, if possible, any personal inconvenience to Mrs. Fitzherbert, which would be attended with extreme mortification to his Royal Highness.

‘I assured his Royal Highness that I would do all I could in the business; and I was appointed to attend with the result of my endeavours, at Carlton House, the next morning. I did attend as appointed; and presented the Prince of Wales with a receipt for the whole sum, 1,585*l.* 11*s.* 7*d.*, which I had that morning paid, being the only effectual means of pacifying the creditor, and removing from the mind of his Royal Highness the anxiety he appeared so strongly to labour under.

‘His Royal Highness was unbounded in his expressions of satisfaction at what I had so promptly accomplished; and in the afternoon on the same day, he came to my house in Piccadilly, and brought with him Mrs. Fitzherbert, for the express purpose, as his Royal Highness condescendingly said, that she might herself thank me for the great and essential service I had that morning rendered to her by the relief my exertions had produced in the minds of his Royal Highness and Mrs. Fitzherbert.’

The second instance, as related by Jefferys, does not place the character of his Royal Highness in the most favourable light.

‘Being once alone with his Royal Highness, he asked me if I had any money to spare for a few days; I replied, that I had in my pocket 630*l.*; but that it was destined for a particular purpose, or I should not have had it about me; however, as the request of his Royal Highness was only for a few days, any part of it was at his service. His Royal Highness took 420*l.*, and, thanking me in very warm terms, assured me, that I might rely on its return in ten days. I refused to take any memorandum for the supposed short loan of this money; but for the return which I expected in ten days, I patiently waited considerably more than a year.’

Jefferys says that he frequently threw himself in the way of the Prince of Wales, hoping that his presence would remind him of the debt, *but no notice was ever taken of it.*

We leave these facts to speak for themselves. It is true that an attempt was made to justify the conduct of his Royal Highness; and as a *sequitur* to defame the character of Jefferys, by an anonymous pamphleteer, under the signature of Philo Veritas, but, like many other zealous advocates, who, by attempting to prove too much, prove nothing at all, the cause and character of his Royal Highness were rather injured than promoted.

The Prince now finding that all his usual resources were exhausted, and that he was totally unable to meet the heavy and incessant demands which were made upon him from the establishment in Park Lane, and others of a more private and secret nature, he formed a resolution which was more loudly applauded, and more strongly condemned, than any action of his eventful life. Surrounded with pecuniary difficulties, and exasperated by the King's refusal to relieve them, he resolved to pursue a course which would have been wise in a private individual, but which, in him who was the depositary of the national honour, must be considered, at the best, as a very dubious virtue. It was an act similar to that of the pettish child who destroys all its playthings because it cannot exactly obtain a particular one on which it has set its heart. This resolution of the Prince was to live on an income of 10,000*l.* a year, appropriating 40,000*l.* annually to the liquidation of his debts till all should be discharged.

Actuated by our acknowledged spirit of impartiality, and anxious to place the conduct of his Royal Highness under the most favourable aspect whenever an opportunity presents itself, we will give the reasons of the panegyrists of his Royal Highness for applauding the resolution which he had now taken.

The answer of the King, declining, in the most peremptory manner, to come forward with any relief of the Prince from his pecuniary embarrassments, was delivered to the Prince on the 4th of May, 1786, through the hands of Lord Southampton; and the comments which a very able eulogist of his Royal Highness makes upon this eventful period of his life, are as follows:—

‘The Prince no sooner received the King's answer than,

with a promptitude that did honour to his spirit as a man, he took only one day to deliberate upon the conduct he should hold in this emergency. He then resolved, in justice to his creditors, to curtail the establishment of his household, to abridge himself of every superfluous expense, and to set apart a large annual sum, to the amount of 40,000*l.*, for the liquidation of his debts. Nothing could be more generous, noble, and high-spirited, than the whole of this proceeding.

‘But the Prince of Wales’s notions of equity were far from stopping here. His Royal Highness had hitherto indulged in a passion frequent among persons of high rank,—that of training running-horses for Newmarket, and other places of public contention of the same kind; but in this emergency he scrupled not a moment to give up a favourite and an innocent (?) relaxation, the more speedily to satisfy the claims of his creditors. Accordingly, his racing stud, which had been formed with great judgment and expense, and which was looked upon as one of the most complete in the kingdom,—his hunters, and even his coach-horses, were sold by public auction, and produced to the amount of seven thousand guineas!’

With the view of placing this extraordinary conduct of his Royal Highness in its proper light, we may, perhaps, be allowed to make a few comments on the consequences which were likely to accrue to the creditors of his Royal Highness on account of these voluntary sacrifices; and in candour we must avow, and we reprobate the advisers of the Prince who could have urged him to such a line of conduct, that several of his acts at this time partook more of the galled spirit of disappointment than of mature reflection and consideration; much less do we admit that they should be attributed to that high sense of honour and integrity with which it was the evident aim of certain individuals to invest them. It was a base and shallow artifice, on the part of the friends of the Prince of Wales, to restore him to that popularity which some recent events had destroyed, and which, acting upon the humane and sympathetic feelings of the English people, they considered themselves certain of obtaining. The idea of a sale of horses and carriages to the amount of 7,000*l.*, to be the means of stifling the claims of creditors of nearly 300,000*l.*, was too

preposterous to be entertained for a moment, excepting by those who thought, if they could adduce *one* example of economy, they should obtain credit for all the others which were promised, but which were never acted upon ; but in furtherance of this spirit of retrenchment and economy, the eulogist of his Royal Highness tells us, ' that at the same time, the buildings and interior decorations of Carlton-house were stopped (we should wish to know when they were ever finished), and some of the most considerable rooms shut up from use. The number of his attendants was also diminished ; but, with that thoughtfulness and kind consideration which always distinguish a truly generous mind, care was taken to settle pensions on those who would otherwise have been reduced to distress on quitting the Prince's service. This trait in the character of his Royal Highness it would have been unpardonable not to have noticed ; and we may add to it, that as he is a kind, provident, and indulgent master, so no Prince was ever more cordially and zealously beloved by his servants. In the shipwreck (if we may be allowed the term) of his fortunes, many of them made him a voluntary offer of their services free from every expense ; and it was not without tears of reluctance, soothed with the promise of being taken again into his service whenever circumstances would admit of the re-establishment of his household, that these humble, but faithful servants, were prevailed on to quit the palace of this much-loved Prince.

' With this magnanimity of feeling did the Prince of Wales think proper to retire from the splendour which belonged to his high station, rather than forfeit that character of honour and integrity which undoubtedly every man ought to consider himself in pledging to his creditors, and which, above all others, should be sacred in the eyes of a prince.

' But the conduct of the Prince of Wales, on this interesting occasion, far from receiving that just tribute of public approbation to which it was so well entitled, from the noble-mindedness of its motives, became a subject of various animadversion. In itself, undoubtedly, and taken abstractedly from any circumstance that had previously agitated the public mind relative to this illustrious personage, like that to which we have before alluded, it was entitled to the highest commendation ; but it is equally certain that it did not obtain from the

nation in general that full and unequivocal approbation which it so justly deserved.'

An anonymous, but candid and sensible political writer, speaking of this transaction, with equal truth and acuteness observes, 'that the temper of the present age is a subject of curious speculation. It cannot be pretended that we are entire strangers to dissipation and profligacy, but there is a prevailing humour that renders us severe upon the subject of virtue. In the great contest between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, on the close of the Parliament which was dissolved in 1784, undoubtedly there were many considerations that co-operated with each other for the purpose of giving so entire a victory to the former. But of all these motives, perhaps the most cogent was that which was derived from the sobriety and purity of Mr. Pitt's conduct, and from the known disposition and propensity to gaming of Mr. Fox. It is equally true, though not perhaps equally obvious, that nothing tended to carry George III. in safety through all the storms and calamities of his reign, more than his perfect freedom from every irregular and vicious pursuit. The contrast, in this respect, between the prince upon the throne and the heir-apparent and successor, was by no means favourable to the latter. There was scarcely any deviation in which the Prince did not occasionally indulge; and it cannot be denied, that the world spoke in language of the strongest censure of the choice which he made of his most intimate companions. All these considerations were tenfold strengthened by the affair of the rumoured marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert. It seemed to press upon the minds of the people as a load which they could not shake off; and every rumour which had a tendency to confirm it, only added to the pressure of the odium which his Royal Highness had to endure. His admirers, it is true, compared him with our favourite Henry V., not considering how extremely injudicious that comparison was to the character of the Prince of Wales; and in the plenitude of their admiration of him, they asserted that his present dissipation was only the ebullition and the first violence of great and noble qualities. But to this it was replied, that the matter in question cut off all hopes. In this instance he had proved that the wildness and inconsideration of his nature were deeply rooted, and that he had no

better and more worthy principles at bottom to check his excesses. To the gratification of a youthful inclination, he had sacrificed the dignity of his character, and the happiness of his country.'

Not to detain our readers with any long comments on the observations of this spirited writer, it is just necessary to observe, that his language towards the Prince, though far from that of forbearance or vindication, falls infinitely short in severity of reproof of the terms of reproach and condemnation with which the press at this period teemed against him. It seemed as if the mercenary scribblers of the metropolis had entered into a regular conspiracy to vilify and degrade the Prince of Wales; and scarcely any writer had the courage, or rather the hardihood, to brandish a pen in his defence. It is not to be supposed that the ministers of the day gave encouragement to their vile and unprincipled machinations; but this much is certain, that the efforts made to check them were languid and inefficient, and it was notorious that those who inveighed most bitterly against the Prince, were the writers who most zealously supported Mr. Pitt's administration. Mr. Pitt's accession to power had been represented by the great leaders of the whig party, truly as it was, as an underhand and unconstitutional transaction: by the minister and his friends, it was pretended that it was necessary to rescue the crown from a dangerous combination; and as there was something plausible in this representation of the case, all those who thought that the constitution could not be preserved without a just equilibrium was maintained among the three estates of the realm, sided with the minister and his friends, as the only way of securing to the crown that degree of authority and influence which they thought it ought to possess, but which was threatened by a combination of powerful leaders in the House of Commons. Considered as a mere theoretical question, it is undoubtedly desirable that the three estates of the kingdom should be perfectly independent of each other; that is, that the king should not dictate either to the Lords or Commons, nor that either of the branches of the legislature should dictate to the throne. But as cases may, and, as is too well known, do arise, where the crown and the Commons differ in opinion, it then becomes a serious ques-

tion which party ought to give way. If the Commons fairly, fully, and freely represented the people, then no question whatever could arise upon the subject, because the monarch must of necessity yield obedience to the wishes of his people; it would not be endured for a moment that the general will should be rendered nugatory by the obstinacy or perverseness of a single individual; but as the British constitution, whatever it may be in theory, certainly is not in practice so perfectly constituted, that the commons of the land can be said to be adequately represented, and the influence of the crown in elections is known to be almost predominant, it certainly appears somewhat strange, and a sort of dereliction of their own interests in the people, that that House of Commons which stood up most strenuously in opposition to the crown, and vindicated the undoubted right of the representatives of the people to put a negative upon the appointment of the King's servants, should have been the most unpopular House of Commons with the people at large that had been assembled since the accession of George III. to the throne. Yet such unquestionably was the fact; and the Prince of Wales, receiving into his confidence the leaders who principally distinguished themselves in that memorable struggle between the crown and the Commons, became a partaker in their unpopularity.

The sacrifices which his Royal Highness made for the ease and security of his creditors, we have already shown, were far from producing the effect which might have been expected from so generous and disinterested a procedure, and his Royal Highness' situation became every day more critical. In less than a month from the period in which he had discharged his household, an attempt was made upon the life of the Sovereign by a wretched maniac, of the name of Margaret Nicholson. When this affair happened, which made a considerable noise at the time, as being the first of the kind, though the danger probably was magnified, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was at Brighton; and the news reached him, not by an immediate conveyance from the King or administration, as delicacy and respect for the rank and situation of the Prince perhaps would have pointed out on such an occasion, but by the information of a private friend. The conduct which the

Prince of Wales adopted was that which became him as a son. Instead of taking offence at the neglect, to say no worse of it, which had been shown him, he quitted Brighton without a moment's delay, and, proceeding post to Windsor, had an interview with the Queen.

Speaking of this period, the writer to whom we have before alluded, says, upon this occasion it might have been expected that the affection which naturally subsists between the parent and the child should have carried the Prince and the King into each other's arms. They did not see each other. The King knew that the Prince was in the house, but he did not think proper to summon him to his presence. The Prince on his part did not demand an interview, because court etiquette seemed to have placed the necessity of the first overture on the other side, and because he naturally imagined, that he had sufficiently displayed the dispositions by which he was actuated, by the journey from which he had just arrived. There had already been a coldness between the King and the Prince, but this was the first occasion in which it had broken out into an open act. It was supposed by many, that the King was displeased with the circumstance of the Prince having thought proper to discard his household without having consulted the inclination of his father, or demanded his consent. It was also supposed that the King participated in the feelings of the majority of his subjects respecting Mrs. Fitzherbert.

This open rupture between the Prince and his father filled up the measure of the son's unpopularity. The experienced and the sage took part against him. The domestic character of the King was well known, and was an object of general respect. It was not probable, they said, that the father should fail in paternal kindness to his son, though it was very possible that the son might fail in filial duty to his father. They affirmed, that, in a quarrel between the two, the son was always in the wrong; and they predicted the most calamitous events as the result of this breach. They looked back to the history of the two preceding reigns, and they believed that something more bitter, more inveterate, and more injurious to government and the people would spring up now than in any former instances.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales persevered in his plan of retrenchment for a period of nine months; and denying himself those accommodations and indulgences to which he was so well entitled both by his rank and personal merit, he adhered rigidly to the plan upon which he had entered, of devoting the greater part of his income to the liquidation of his debts. Nothing could have been more proper and dignified than the conduct his Royal Highness had observed; but its effect on the public mind was far from answering the expectations of the Prince's friends. They were in hopes that so striking an instance of magnanimity and disinterestedness on the part of the Prince of Wales would have operated somewhere, either on the feelings of his royal father, or on the generosity of the House of Commons, so as to occasion his embarrassments to be taken up as a matter of national concern. But, disappointed in this reasonable expectation, the Prince felt himself indisposed any longer to submit to the indignity of his situation, or to live upon the contracted scale on which, with the most laudable intentions, he had limited his expenses.

The public opinion, as we have before intimated, was divided as to the line of conduct proper to be adopted towards the Prince in this emergency. On the one hand, it was said, that the Prince of Wales was the fittest person to do the honours of the nation to those foreigners of distinction who visited it; and that the magnificence of his living, the liberality of his temper, and the affability of his disposition, were well calculated to exalt and to do credit to the English character. His present situation was, therefore, to be considered as a disgrace to the nation. It exhibited us, they said, in the eyes of Europe, either as impoverished and impotent, or as governed by an injudicious and ill-timed penuriousness, that curbed and chained down the manly inclinations of the first subject in the realm, and froze up the natural current of his spirit and generosity. On the other hand, in opposition to those who argued thus liberally and sensibly, it was maintained, that the irregular and faulty character of the Prince of Wales required a severe and rigorous discipline. They admitted that he had shown some rectitude of judgment, that he knew how to choose the path of virtue, but that it was necessary he should be taught how to persist in it, in spite of

the thorns and ruggedness that surrounded it. Adversity, they said, was never yet injurious to improvement, but that a person of the highest rank was in danger of being spoiled by uninterrupted prosperity, and, therefore, it was right that poverty, hardship, and inconvenience should teach the Prince to feel for the sufferings of other men.

Such were the principal arguments, on this interesting occasion, that were used by those who were the advocates of the Prince, and by those who condemned his conduct. While such was the state of the controversy (to use a parliamentary phrase) out of doors, his Royal Highness having tried, as he conceived, every other expedient for his extrication, at length thought proper, as the last resort, to authorize an application to be made to Parliament; and the person to whose management this delicate business was intrusted, was Mr. Nathaniel Newnham, a merchant of great eminence, and alderman, and one of the representatives for the city of London. A more proper person could not have been selected for the occasion. Mr. Newnham was, in every sense of the word, an independent man. Engaged in a lucrative business, and possessed of an ample fortune, he had nothing to hope or to wish from court favour; and though on political questions he usually espoused that side which was opposite to the existing administration, there was nothing in his parliamentary conduct which, strictly construed, could entitle him to the epithet of a party man.

The business was first agitated on the 20th of April, 1787, when Mr. Newnham put the question to Mr. Pitt, whether it was his intention to bring forward any proposition to rescue the Prince of Wales from his embarrassed and distressed situation. Being answered by the minister, that he had received no commands to that purpose from the King, the alderman gave notice, that on Friday, the 4th of May, he would bring forward a motion upon that subject for the consideration of the House.

This notice produced a very extraordinary impression upon the minds of his hearers, and awakened the utmost anxiety in different descriptions of persons in parliament. Mr. Pitt, a few days afterwards, revived the subject, and requested to be informed more particularly respecting the precise nature of the

proposed motion. To this Mr. Newnham did not think proper to accede; and Mr. Pitt then observed, that the subject was of the highest importance in itself, of the greatest novelty, likely to affect the most essential interests of the country, and of all others required the greatest delicacy in its discussion. The knowledge, he said, which he possessed on the subject, made him particularly desirous of avoiding it; but, if it were absolutely determined to bring it forward, he would, however distressing it might prove to him as an individual, discharge his duty to the public, and enter fully into the subject.

On the 27th of April, Mr. Newnham stated to the House the precise nature of his motion, which was for an address to his Majesty, praying him to take into his royal consideration the situation of the Prince of Wales, and to grant his Royal Highness such relief as in his wisdom he should think fit, pledging the House to make good the same. Mr. Rolle (member for Devonshire, and the same gentleman to whom the humorous poem of the Rolliad was addressed) observed that he felt much concern to find that Mr. Newnham persisted in his intention, and particularly called the attention of the country gentlemen to the subject, as one of those questions, he affirmed, that tended immediately to affect the constitution in church and state.

Mr. Sheridan, in reply to what had fallen from Mr. Rolle, declared himself highly impressed with a sense of the magnitude and importance of the subject, and considered it of as much consequence as any that had ever been agitated within the walls of that assembly. But he could not agree, he said, that it interested the country gentlemen alone, and not every individual member of Parliament. Mr. Sheridan took notice of Mr. Rolle's expression respecting the constitution in church and state, to which, he said, he did not know what precise meaning to affix; and he recurred to another expression employed by Mr. Pitt, which, on account of the station of the person from whom it came, was entitled to the more serious observation. Mr. Sheridan meant, he said, an insinuation that had fallen from the minister, that there were circumstances which must come out in the discussion, which would show the impropriety of granting the assistance required. In reply to this, Mr. Sheridan declared, from the best and highest authority, that neither

the friends of the Prince of Wales, nor his Royal Highness himself, had any other wish than that every circumstance in the whole series of his conduct should be minutely and accurately investigated. His Royal Highness, he felt himself authorized to say, desired that no part of his conduct, circumstances, or situation, should be treated with ambiguity, concealment, or affected tenderness, but that whatever related to him should be discussed openly, and with fair, manly, and direct examination. Mr. Sheridan added, that he had expected long before that the unpleasantness of the discussion would have been prevented by relief from another quarter, and that he felt an extreme reluctance in agitating it in a hostile manner.

Mr. Dempster, Mr. Hussey, Mr. Powys, and some others, who were generally known by the denomination of country gentlemen, now interfered, and joined their intreaties to Mr. Newnham, that he would give up his intended motion. Mr. Powys, a member of great weight and respectability, observed, that instead of hearing on that day an explanation of what might be the substance of the motion, he had rather expected that the honourable member who had prepared it, would have come and asked pardon of the House for the impropriety of his conduct. He declared that there never was a question in which he had felt so much, or was so incapable, from agitation, of expressing what he was anxious to say; and he trusted that every person who wished well to the country, or was attached to the family on the throne, would use every possible effort to prevent it from being debated.

Mr. Pitt now rose, and, after professing much good will and respect for the Prince of Wales, declared he was greatly concerned, that by the perseverance of Mr. Newnham, he should be driven, though with infinite reluctance, to the disclosure of circumstances which he had an opportunity of knowing, and which he would otherwise have thought it his duty to conceal. He disclaimed any idea of insinuation, and asserted, that the form of the motion, so far from rendering it agreeable to him, was, of all others, the most improper and unjustifiable that could be proposed.

Mr. Sheridan replied, that he was unable to comprehend why the notice of the measure should have occasioned so much

alarm among the country gentlemen. But be that as it would, the minister had himself erected an insuperable bar to the withdrawing of the motion. Insinuations had been thrown out in the first instance, he said, and converted into assertions, on that day, which the honour and feelings of the parties made it necessary to have explained. Should the persons engaged in the measure now recede from it, could the House, could the country, or could Europe, form any other opinion of such behaviour, than that the Prince had yielded to terror what he had denied to argument? Mr. Sheridan very successfully repelled the charge that had been made against the party with whom he acted, of fomenting the unhappy divisions that were conceived to exist in the Royal family. The charge was as foolish as it was false. Such divisions, he said, so far from assisting, must materially injure those who were not admitted into his Majesty's councils, and whose opposition was in reality founded, not in personal animosities, but upon broad constitutional grounds.

The spirited manner in which the question was taken up by Mr. Sheridan now induced Mr. Pitt to declare, that the particulars to which he had alluded, and which he should think it necessary to state more fully to the House, related only to the pecuniary situation of the Prince of Wales, and to a correspondence which had taken place on that subject, and had no reference to any extraneous circumstances. He trusted, therefore, that this matter being explained, he should prevail in his intreaties to prevent the proceeding any further in a business which, though he had no doubt it was undertaken from a regard to the honour of the Royal family, and the interests of the country, must, if persisted in, be productive of consequences most injurious to both.

Mr. Newnham, in reply to these observations, remarked, that he was not so rash and presumptuous as to have taken up the idea of his motion from the bare suggestion of his own mind, and that, having brought himself to undertake a matter of so much importance, neither was he so weak as to feel any alarm for consequences which might be held out with an interested view to drive him from it.

Two days after this conversation, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Thomas Pelham (afterwards Earl of Chichester), of the friends of the intended motion of Alderman Newnham,

at which the Prince of Wales was present, in order to consider of the state of the business, and to concert such measures as might be thought proper under the present circumstances ; and, in consequence of this meeting, new ground was taken in a conversation that was introduced in the House of Commons on the following day. Mr. Newnham began with alluding to the remark which had been made by Mr. Pitt, that the mode of application by address to the throne was of all others the most exceptionable ; and declared, that he should therefore think it right to decline that form of proceeding, and, if Mr. Pitt would point out a mode of application the most mild and the least likely to provoke resistance, he would readily adopt that mode, in preference to any other that might occur to him. He observed, that certain hints had been thrown out by Mr. Pitt respecting the singular delicacy of some matters that it would be necessary to agitate, which hints, though questionable in their appearance, were explained by the minister in a satisfactory manner. Another allusion had been employed by Mr. Rolle, who had talked of the question as affecting our constitution in church and state, and he conceived that that gentleman was bound as a man of honour, to come to an open explanation of what he intended by that allusion.

Mr. Fox, who had not been present at the preceding conversations, now followed Mr. Newnham. The testimony of that illustrious senator was decisive in the Prince's favour. He had understood, he said, that Mr. Sheridan, on a former occasion, had observed, that the Prince did not wish to shrink from any inquiry which it might be thought necessary to institute. Mr. Fox now confirmed that assertion, from the immediate authority of the Prince. With regard to the private correspondence in question, he was desirous to have it laid before the House, because it would prove the conduct of the Prince to have been in the highest degree amiable, and would present a uniform and perfect picture of duty and obedience, as much so as had ever in any instance been shown, from a son to his father, or from a subject to his sovereign. As to the debt which was the cause of his embarrassment, Mr. Fox declared, that the Prince of Wales was willing to give a general and fair account of it ; and if any part of it were doubted,

from a suspicion that this or that article of the account comprehended any sums of money indirectly applied, he would give a clear explanation to the King or his ministers. He had not the smallest objection to affording the House every possible satisfaction, and *there was not a circumstance of his life which he was ashamed to have known*. With respect to the allusion to church and state, Mr. Fox said, that until the person who had made it thought proper to explain himself, it was impossible for him to say with certainty to what it referred. But he supposed it must have originated in that miserable calumny, that low malicious falsehood, which had been propagated out of doors, and made the wanton sport of the vulgar. He hoped, however, that a tale, fit only to impose on the lower order of persons in the street, would not have gained the smallest degree of credit. But, when it appeared that an invention so monstrous, that a report of a fact, which was destitute of the slightest foundation, and which was absolutely impossible to have happened, had been circulated with so much industry, and made so deep an impression, it proved at once the uncommon pains taken by the enemies of the Prince to propagate the grossest and most malignant falsehoods, to injure him in the opinion of his country and of Europe. Mr. Fox added, that when he considered his Royal Highness was the first subject in the kingdom, and the immediate heir to the throne, he was at a loss to imagine what species of party it was, that could have originated so base and scandalous a calumny. Had there existed in the kingdom such a faction as an anti-Brunswick faction, to that faction he should certainly have attributed the fabrication of so infamous a falsehood; for he saw not what other description of men could feel an interest, in first inventing, and then circulating, with more than ordinary assiduity, a tale in every particular so unfounded. Mr. Fox farther added, that the Prince had authorized him to declare, that as a Peer of Parliament, his Royal Highness was ready, in the other House, to submit to any of the most pointed questions that could be put to him upon the subject, or to afford the King or his ministers the fullest assurances of the utter falsehood of the fact in question. With respect to the alarming consequences, talked of as likely to be the effect of a parliamentary discus-

sion of the Prince's situation, Mr. Fox declared, that he saw no reason whatever to dread them.

Mr. Pitt now rose, and observed, that Mr. Newnham had mistaken the nature of his objection to the intended motion. His opposition, he said, was pointed at every proposal which should originate such a subject in that house; so that in fact the form in which it was done could have very little weight in his consideration. Mr. Fox, he observed, had proceeded a little too far, in having charged him with dealing in insinuations and inuendoes, merely because he had stated that disagreeable topics would be found to mingle in the discussion of the subject. Mr. Pitt added, that it little became Mr. Fox at the same time to throw out hints and insinuations, evidently calculated and intended to fall somewhere, and upon some person, whom, though he had not mentioned, he seemed to think the House would be able to discover. Such expressions, he was convinced, no member could expect him to answer. Mr. Fox had not pointed his charge against any individual, nor should he point it for him.

Mr. Rolle, who was evidently alluded to in the latter part of Mr. Pitt's speech, now rose, and acknowledged, that the subject upon which Mr. Fox had spoken, was the matter to which he referred, as affecting both church and state. That matter had been stated and discussed in the newspapers all over the kingdom, and it had made an impression on him, and upon almost all ranks of men in the country who loved and venerated the constitution. Mr. Fox had said, that it was impossible to have happened. They all knew, that there were certain laws and acts of Parliament which forbade it; but though it could not be done under the formal sanction of law, there were ways in which it might have taken place. Those laws, in the minds of some persons, might be satisfactorily evaded, and yet the fact might be equally productive of the most alarming consequences. It ought, therefore, for the satisfaction of those who had their fears on the subject, to be fully cleared up.

Mr. Fox replied to the last speaker with great animation. He did not, he said, deny the calumny in question, merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but he denied it *in*

toto, in point of fact as well as law. The fact, he affirmed, not only never could have happened legally, but never did happen any way, and had from the beginning been a base and malicious falsehood. Mr. Rolle rose again, and asked whether, in what he had said, Mr. Fox had spoken from direct authority. Mr. Fox declared that he had spoken from direct authority.

Mr. Rolle making no reply to this, Mr. Sheridan rose, and observed, that the honourable gentleman, after having put a pointed question and received an immediate answer, was bound, in honour and fairness, either to declare that he was satisfied, or to take some means of putting the matter into such a state of inquiry as should satisfy him. To remain silent, or to declare (which was the only answer which could be extorted from Mr. Rolle) that the House would judge for themselves of what had passed, was neither manly nor candid. If, therefore, he did not choose to say he was satisfied, Mr. Sheridan thought that the House ought to come to a resolution, that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports injurious to the character of the Prince, and thus, by their interposition, to discountenance the report.

The argument of Mr. Sheridan was enforced in a brief speech by Mr. Grey, then a young but promising member of the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt affected to consider the language of Mr. Sheridan as the most direct attack upon the freedom of debate and liberty of speech in that House that had been made ever since he sat in Parliament. In his opinion, the members on that side of the House should rather be obliged to the gentleman who was the first to suggest a question which had been the means of bringing forward so explicit a declaration on so interesting a subject, and one which must give complete satisfaction, not only to Mr. Rolle, but to the whole House. Mr. Pitt added, that he was particularly prepared to disprove any arguments which might be brought in support of the necessity of an application to parliament, as he had opportunities of knowing, from the correspondence which had passed, that no such necessity could arise from the want of a fit degree of forwardness in another quarter to do everything which ought to be done in the business.

In this stage of the transaction, an intimation was conveyed

to the Prince of Wales, that Mr. Dundas (then one of the secretaries of state) would be glad, if his Royal Highness had no objection, to have an interview with him. This overture was reported to have sprung from some things that had been dropped by the Duchess of Gordon upon the subject, in a conversation between her Grace and Mr. Pitt. Whether this was actually the case, it is not for us to determine, but it is certain that the intimation had every desired effect. Mr. Dundas had an interview with the Prince at Carlton-house, and the following day Mr. Pitt was admitted to his Royal Highness. In consequence of these interviews, Mr. Newnham acquainted the House of Commons, on the day originally selected for his long-expected motion, that that motion was now no longer necessary, and therefore, with the most sincere and heartfelt satisfaction, he declined bringing it forward.

Mr. Drake (member for Agmondesham) was the first to express his sentiments upon the subject, which he did, as he observed, in a very disarranged and unconnected style; but added, that the excessive gladness of his heart was superior to eloquence, and the pleasantness of his sensations almost deprived him of the power of uttering his sentiments. He expressed his wishes, that the King might continue to reign over a great, loyal, and united people, till the utmost period of humanity; and that, when by the course of nature his successor should mount the throne, he might copy the pious example and purity of manners of his Royal Father. Mr. Rolle concurred in being pleased with the circumstance of the motion's being withdrawn, but observed, that the terms upon which the difference had been accommodated were an entire secret to him, but, if it should hereafter appear that any concessions had been made humiliating to the country, or dishonourable in themselves, he should be the first man to stand up in the house and stigmatize them as they deserved.

A discussion somewhat curious in its nature now followed between Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt. By the latter it was remarked, that he concurred in the general joy, in finding that Mr. Newnham had at last discovered, in consequence of steps very recently pursued by the Prince of Wales, that the measure which he had undertaken was unnecessary. For himself he could not avoid declaring, that, as he had all along regarded it as super-

fluous, so he did not now see that it was more so than at the time when the notice was given. Mr. Fox, in reply to this, declared, that he was as much 'convinced that the motion had been necessary, as he was, at that moment, persuaded that it was no longer necessary. Mr. Pitt, in answer, expressed his aversion to the saying anything which might lead to a discussion of the subject, but he would declare, that he knew of no alteration in the circumstances of the case, and was confident that nothing had taken place which might not equally have been brought about without any such interference, as that which had been resorted to. As to what Mr. Rolle had said of terms and conditions, he knew of none that had been made. There was no concession of any sort on the part of that person, who was the highest and most distinguished on the present occasion. His conduct had been uniform and consistent; and he had not, in any one instance, departed from those principles which had all along influenced his proceedings.

Mr. Fox acknowledged that the mention of any thing like terms was highly improper and objectionable; but as Mr. Pitt had chosen to say, that the conduct of one party had been uniform and consistent, it became his duty to declare, that the conduct of the other party alluded to had been equally uniform, perfectly respectful, and entitled to the highest commendations.

Mr. Sheridan now rose, and observed, that he saw no reason, on the one hand, why the conversation should be prolonged; nor, on the other, did he conceive that a necessity for abridging it could arise from any apprehension that it might terminate in altercation or difference of opinion. He would not enter into the distinctions which Mr. Pitt had attempted to make, and, if the object of them were to insinuate that the merit of the reconciliation belonged exclusively to the ministers of the sovereign, he should leave them to the consciousness of that merit. Opposition were ready to waive every title to credit, since, in truth, the measures which had been adopted were the result of the Prince's own judgment, which none but those who did not know him could consider as needing the assistance or counsel of any other person. Mr. Sheridan, in a very impressive and animated tone, reminded the House, that the Prince of Wales had shrunk from no inquiry, though he acknowledged that no

such ideas having been pursued, was a matter that did credit to the decorum, the dignity, and the feelings of Parliament. But, while the Prince's feelings had, no doubt, been considered on the occasion, he must take the liberty of saying, however some might think it a subordinate consideration, that there was another person entitled, in the judgment of every delicate and honourable mind to the same attention : one, whom he would not venture otherwise to describe, than by saying, it was a name, which malice or ignorance alone could attempt to injure, and whose conduct and character were entitled to the truest respect.

Fourteen days subsequently to this conversation, a message from the King was delivered to both Houses of Parliament, informing them, that it was with great concern his Majesty had to acquaint them, that, from the accounts of the Prince of Wales, it appeared that he had incurred a debt to a large amount, which, if left to be discharged out of his annual income, would render it impossible for him to support an establishment suited to his rank and station. Painful as it was at all times to the King to propose any addition to the heavy expenses of his people, he was induced to the present application from his paternal affection to the Prince of Wales. He could not, however, expect nor desire the assistance of Parliament, but on a well-grounded expectation that the Prince would avoid contracting any debts in future. With a view to this object, the King had directed a sum of 10,000*l.* per annum to be paid out of the civil list, in addition to his former allowance ; and he had the satisfaction to observe, that the Prince had given the fullest assurance of his determination to confine his future expenses within the limits of his income, and had settled a plan and fixed an order in those expenses, which, it was trusted, would effectually secure the due execution of his intentions. The King further recommended to Parliament the completing, in a proper manner, the works that had been undertaken at Carlton-house.

Mr. Rolle was the only person who spoke upon the occasion of delivering this message. He observed, however, that he would not anticipate the subsequent debate. The accounts were presented to the House of Commons on the Wednesday

following, and on the next day an address was voted to the King, to request his Majesty to direct the sum of 161,000*l.* to be paid out of the civil list for the full discharge of the debts of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the further sum of 20,000*l.* on account of the works at Carlton-house.

The popularity of a prince generally rises or falls with his fortunes. The excessive liberality, the munificent patronage of the arts, and the numerous accomplishments of the Prince of Wales, gained him a certain portion of the public esteem; but, on the other hand, a contempt of economy, a readiness to form engagements which it was impossible to meet, extravagant amusements, and a life of dissipation, weaned from him the affections of those whose good opinions were necessary to the preservation of his reputation. But the errors which excited the displeasure of his father, and affected his popularity, were a love of gaming, and the indiscreet selection of his political associates.

That bane of English society, the spirit of party, had infused a more than usual portion of its leaven into the whole mass of the nation; and men were judged of, not by merit, but by their attachment to this or that political dogma, or by their preference of one or other of the tests of patriotic virtue which were then in fashion, and which, like other nostrums, have had their day of popularity, and are forgotten. Under such circumstances, it was impossible to mingle with the world, and choose associates, without becoming identified with one of these divided parties. Educated as the Prince had been, it was, no doubt, meritorious in him to step beyond the circle of the court, and at his first outset to make brilliant talents, more than coincidence of creed, the necessary qualification to secure his intimacy.

It is well known that the Prince selected for his friends and confidants a set of men whose abilities were an honour to the nation; but how deeply is it to be regretted that the private habits of those individuals should have been loose and profligate in proportion to the splendour of their talents! How natural that the Prince should have been captivated by the brilliancy of wit, the charms of eloquence, the fervour of imagination, the profundity of thought, the capacity of intellect,

the mighty powers of mind which distinguished a Fox, a Sheridan, and a Burke. It was no small temptation to a youth just bursting from the trammels of tuition, to find all that was valuable in his instructors concentrated in his friends, without its accompanying gravity and restraint.

But when we look back upon the abyss of disgrace into which these profligate men impelled their thoughtless victim—leading him from one excess to another, until the utter extinction of every moral principle would have been the consequence, had not an almost providential power timely interfered, and wrested him from their fangs—we are then apt to deprecate the possession of such talents, and deplore their misapplication to the basest and vilest of purposes.

The great vice of these extraordinary men was the love of gaming: indeed it may be said, that, with the majority of them, the liquidation of the exigencies of the day depended on their good fortune at the faro-table. It was at this time the practice of the Jews to frequent the gaming-houses in the morning, for the express purpose of purchasing the I O U's of the Prince, for, as they were given for debts of honour, their payment was considered sure. But in what manner were they generally paid? If the I O U was for 500*l.*, a bond or some other solid security was given for 600*l.*; the Jew, in order to purge the transaction of usury, selling to the Prince some trifling piece of plate, or an article of jewellery, for the extra 100*l.* The Prince, in some instances, expressed his high sense of displeasure at this traffic in his negotiable securities; and in one or two cases, he threatened that he would not play with the individual whom he detected in this practice; but, to the great mortification of the Prince, he found, that although he was aware of the ultimate ruin in which it would involve him, yet, that as in some instances he could not discharge his I O U from his immediate funds, it was a system of great convenience to have a resource always at hand by which his honour could be saved. But it was not only at the gaming-table that the losses of the Prince were immense, but on the course and in the pugilistic ring, he was the dupe of the blackguard and the sharper. As there is no prescribing to peculiar tastes, it is unnecessary to inquire how far a participation in these pleasures became the

heir-apparent to the crown of a great kingdom, or however it may be wisdom to feel, or to affect to feel a high relish for the daily sports of the common people, it is still evident, that his extravagant fondness for such expensive pleasures involved him in the greatest difficulties, surrounded him with embarrassments, weaned him from the affection of the King, and destroyed his popularity with the better part of the nation.

It appears certain that his association with the great leaders of the Opposition had shaken the confidence of the Prince in the integrity of that man who, with the most upright intentions and the most consummate skill, wielded the national energies in the most critical period of our history. It is equally clear, that Mr. Pitt's opinion of the Prince was warped by political prejudice. They did not, or they would not, understand each other. The party of the minister visited the Prince's attachment to those talented individuals, whom he especially distinguished as a political sin; while the Opposition themselves affected to consider the admiration with which the Prince regarded them, as due to their principles and not to their talents. They succeeded too well in involving him in some overt acts of disobedience to the King, injudicious and offensive in themselves, and swelled into overwhelming importance by the distrust and coldness of the royal bosom, and by the envious distortion of malignant scribblers influencing the ministry and the country.

In the society of his friends the Prince was plunged into extravagance: by their advice he degraded his station under the shallow pretext of self-denial; to serve them he voted, as a peer in parliament, against a measure of his father's minister; for them he condescended to corrupt the press, a portion of which, to its own disgrace, was sufficiently venal to come to terms of bargain and sale. Through these he appealed to the Commons for assistance in his pecuniary difficulties; by their mismanagement he gave, or appeared to give, a pledge to the nation which was afterwards broken, and to their counsels and directions he submitted himself in one of the most important eras of his life.

An afflicting circumstance now occurred, which brought the Prince of Wales again prominently before the public eye. This

was the malady of the King. His first illness in 1765, his speech to Parliament on his recovery, and the examination of the medical attendants during the continuance of the complaint, had prepared the nation for a recurrence of the affliction, and had warned it of the necessity for making provision against a similar calamity; nothing, however, had been decided, and when the dreaded affliction reappeared in 1789, it found the ministry unprovided with a remedy. The discussion of the question threatened to unsettle the constitution itself. The goodness of God, more than the wisdom of man, averted the awful consequences that might have ensued.

In 1765, the Queen had been appointed, with a council of regency, to execute the necessary functions of the provisional government; and there were not wanting persons who accused her Majesty of endeavouring, by court intrigue and political manœuvre, to be again called to that post of high responsibility. The good understanding which always subsisted between the Queen and her son, and the general character of that august lady, sufficiently refute the calumny. In 1789, the Prince of Wales was twenty-seven years of age, with abilities and understanding far beyond his years. His residence at Carlton-house was a little court, and the reputed talent of the country rallied round his anticipated throne. In common circumstances the nation, with one voice, would have called this gifted individual to supply the vacant seat of his afflicted father; but the English are a jealous people. The private conduct of the Prince and his political associates had made him dreaded, as much as his personal character and his extraordinary accomplishments had won for him the admiration of the world. The friends and advocates of the Prince, in the House of Commons, insisted on the right—the inherent abstract right—of the Prince to assume the reins of government in this unprecedented position of affairs. They demanded for him the unqualified power and unrestricted authority of the King. They looked upon the father as politically dead, and regarded delay and discussion as treason against the son. The Prince himself never claimed these rights, nor is it to be inferred that he denied their existence; they were demanded for him in one branch of the constitution by his avowed counsellors

and friends; and his claim was supported in the other by the Duke of York, whose situation in the course of these discussions, as a son, a brother, and the second in succession to the crown, was most delicate and singularly critical.

It is needless to say, with what splendid abilities these claims were explained and enforced. Fox was recalled from a tour on the Continent, to thunder forth his eloquent indignation against the opposers of the Prince. The versatility of Sheridan was taxed, from the sparkling coruscations of his effulgent wit, to the strong and steady light of his commanding reason. Burke, in whom were combined the most acute conception of the right, and the highest relish for the absurdities of the wrong, with perfect power of argument and eloquence to enforce the one, and the most keen and polished ridicule to expose the other, lavished the rich treasures of his oratory on this important question.

Nor will it be inquired in what manner this host of strength could be defeated. The persevering efforts of a mind conscious of its rectitude, the steady opposition of a character adored for its integrity—the intuitive perception of the truth, and that wonderful power of combination, which, above all other qualities, distinguished the political ability of Pitt, were of themselves sufficient to ward off this strange attack upon the privileges of the kingdom.

A regard to self-interest was imputed to each party; and it is evident, that in the then temper of the Prince's mind, his sudden elevation to unrestricted power (as far as that term may be applied to the limited monarchy of England) would have changed the relative position of the two great political parties. It is, however, infinitely more reasonable to consider each side influenced by their conviction of what was necessary for the public good. Mr. Pitt's view of the case was—that no inherent right existed in the Prince; and he thought it most important that a distinct declaration to that effect should be inserted in the journals of the House, as a preliminary measure. In expediency, and as a matter of discretion, he thought the legislative authority was bound to place the power of the executive in the hands of the Prince. It was, however, in his opinion, most essentially requisite that the enjoyment of that power

should be distinctly limited to the period of the King's recovery; that it should be contracted within certain bounds; and, above all, that the person and property of the King should be confided to the guardianship of another. Resolutions to that effect passed both Houses, in spite of the most strenuous opposition; and the Prince accepted the regency, subject to such limitations, but not without a remonstrance against their imposition.

Faction of course imputed to personal considerations, and construed into injurious suspicion and insulting reflections, the regulations, which, with a due regard to the national safety, and as a matter of precedent in the novelty of the case, it was the absolute duty of the minister to construct and to impose. The still credited, though often contradicted report of the Prince's marriage with a papist, the coldness with which he was (perhaps unjustly) regarded by the King, his dissolute life, his extravagance, his debts, and the dread of his political connexions, united the country gentlemen, and formed a phalanx round the minister, which all the eloquence of the Opposition failed to penetrate.

Parliament met on the 20th of November, 1788; and, after the ministers had briefly explained his Majesty's melancholy situation, both Houses adjourned for a fortnight. At their next meeting, a committee of twenty-one persons in each House was appointed to examine and report the sentiments of the royal physicians; and a further adjournment to the 10th of December took place. On that day, the report of the committee was laid upon the table of the House of Commons; and, after commenting upon it some time, Mr. Pitt moved, 'That a committee be appointed to examine and report precedents of such proceedings as may have been had, in cases of the personal exercise of the royal authority being prevented or interrupted by infancy, sickness, infirmity, or otherwise, with a view to provide for the same.'

This motion, which evidently went to cause a waste of time, was strenuously deprecated by Mr. Fox, who, being on an excursion to the Continent when the King's illness was first known, had been sent express for by the Prince of Wales, to assist him in this emergency with his counsels. Mr. Fox contended that it

was the duty of Parliament to lose no time in proceeding to provide some measure for the exigency of the present moment; and he thought that exigency so pressing in point of time, that he, for one, would oppose the motion then made. What, he asked, were they going to search for? Not precedents upon their journals, not parliamentary precedents, but precedents in the history of England. He would be bold to say, nay they all knew, that the doing so would be a loss of time: for there existed no precedents whatever that could bear upon the present case. There might have been an incompetency, there might have been an inability in former monarchs, to direct the reins of government; but if such a misfortune had happened to the country, it had happened at a time when there was not the alleviation of a natural substitute. The circumstance to be provided for did not depend upon their deliberation, it rested elsewhere. There was then a person in the kingdom, differing from any other person that any existing precedents could refer to—*an heir-apparent, of full age and capacity to exercise the regal power*. It behoved them, therefore, not to waste a moment unnecessarily, but to proceed, with all becoming speed and all becoming diligence, to restore the sovereign power, and the exercise of the royal authority. When the unfortunate situation of his Majesty was first made known to that House, by a presentation of the minute of the privy council, some gentlemen had expressed a doubt whether the House could make such a paper a ground of parliamentary proceeding. Mr. Fox declared, that he had gone farther; that he thought the report of the privy council was not an authentic document, nor such as that House could make the ground of its proceeding. The defect had now been remedied; and the House was, in consequence of the regular examination which his Majesty's physicians had undergone before a committee of their own, in possession of the true state of the King's health. That being known to the House, and through them to the nation at large, he contended that it was then, and then only, the precise point of time for the House to decide, and that not a moment ought to be lost. From what he had read of history, from the ideas he had formed of the law, and, what was still more precious, of the spirit of the constitution—from every reasoning and analogy, drawn from those sources, Mr. Fox de-

clared that he had not in his mind a doubt, and he should think himself culpable, if he did not take the first opportunity of declaring it, *that in the present condition of his Majesty, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to exercise the power of sovereignty, during the continuance of the incapacity with which it had pleased God to afflict the King, as in the event of his Majesty's having undergone a natural demise.* Mr. Fox said, that, entertaining that opinion, he thought it candid to come forward fairly, and avow it at that instant. If the Prince of Wales did not instantly claim those powers to which, from analogy, from history, and from the spirit of the constitution, he was clearly entitled; if he acted in a manner more suited to his character and education; that moderation should be their strongest incitement to do him justice. The Prince, Mr. Fox said, had been bred up in those principles which had placed his illustrious House upon the throne, and with a known reverence and regard for those principles, as the true fundamentals of our glorious constitution, in the maintenance of which his family had flourished with so much prosperity and happiness as the sovereigns of the British empire. Hence it was, that his Royal Highness chose rather to wait the decision of Parliament, with a patient and due deference to the constitution, than urge a claim which, he trusted, a majority of that House and of the people at large admitted, and which, he was persuaded, could not reasonably be disputed. But, asked Mr. Fox, ought the Prince of Wales to wait unnecessarily? Ought his Royal Highness to wait while precedents were searched for, when it was known that none bearing upon the case, which so nearly concerned him, existed? In the deference and forbearance of the Prince they were not to forget his right. In all their observations, they should remember that there was such a claim existing, and it should serve to hasten their decisions, as far as was consistent with the magnitude of the occasion.

Mr. Pitt immediately commenced a very warm reply. The doctrine advanced by Mr. Fox, he said, was itself, if any additional reason was necessary, the strongest and most unanswerable for the appointment of the committee he had moved for, that could possibly be given. If a claim of right was intimated

(even though not formally) on the part of the Prince of Wales, to assume the government, it became of the utmost consequence to ascertain, from precedent and history, whether this claim were well founded, which, if it was, precluded the House from the possibility of all deliberation on the subject. In the mean time, he maintained, that it would appear from every precedent, and from every page of our history, that to assert such a right in the Prince of Wales, or any one else, independent of the decision of the two Houses of Parliament, was little less than treason to the constitution of the country. He pledged himself to this assertion, that in the case of the interruption of the personal exercise of the royal authority, without any previous lawful provision having been made for carrying on the government, it belonged to the other branches of the legislature, on the part of the nation at large (the body they represented), to provide according to their discretion for the temporary exercise of the royal authority, in the name and on the behalf of the sovereign, in such manner as they should think requisite; and that, unless by their decision, the Prince of Wales had no right (speaking of strict right) to assume the government, any more than any other individual in the country. Whatever might be the discretion of Parliament, with respect to the disposition of those powers, their right to dispose of them was undoubted; and that, until the sanction of Parliament was obtained, the Prince of Wales had no more right to exercise the powers of government than any other person in the realm.

In the Upper House of Parliament, a similar motion for a committee was made by Lord Camden (lord president of the council) on the following day; and as Mr. Fox's doctrine had excited a large share of the public attention, as well on account of the talents and estimation of the character by whom it was delivered, as from the circumstance that he was well known to be high in the confidence of the Prince of Wales, it was particularly alluded to by Lord Camden in the speech with which he introduced his motion. Lord Loughborough (then Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas), who headed the Prince of Wales' party in the House of Peers, and was supposed to look forward to the post of Chancellor, in the event of the Prince's having been declared regent, rose

to vindicate the sentiments of Mr. Fox. His Lordship observed, that there was an act of King Charles II., by which it was expressly declared, that no law could in any case be made, but by the authority of the three branches of the legislature; and that any man asserting the contrary would be liable to the penalties of high treason. Could anything, therefore, be more absurd, than to say, that the two Houses of Parliament, which could not even make a turnpike act, might dispose, by their own authority, of the executive government? There were only two cases, his Lordship maintained, in which the throne could become vacant, and the interference of the two Houses of Parliament be requisite to fill it: the one was a total subversion of the government by a breach of the original compact, as in the case of an abdication of the crown; the other, when the royal line became extinct, and the king at his decease left no heir. It had been declared, that the Prince of Wales had no more right than any private subject. Could this be true? Was the Prince of Wales a common subject? Did not the law, as expounded by Lord Coke, describe him to be one and the same person with the king? Was it not equally high treason to compass or imagine the death either of the one or the other? It happened that at this time, the two Houses were legally assembled under the King's writs; but, if the case had been otherwise, it would surely have been warrantable for the Prince of Wales, as heir-apparent, to have issued writs, and called a parliament. Lord Loughborough was far from meaning that the Prince could violently rush into the sovereignty, but thought, that upon the authentic notification of the King's incapacity to the two Houses of Parliament, the Prince ought of right to be invested with the royal authority. He next begged leave to remind his hearers, that there was a neighbouring kingdom that stood connected with us, and acknowledged allegiance to the British crown. If the regency was declared to be elective, and not hereditary, how could we be sure that they would not choose a regent of their own, and thus lead to endless confusion and embarrassment?

Lord Stormont supported the principles of Lord Loughborough, adducing a similar argument from the Act of Union with Scotland, and concluded with recommending an immediate

address to the Prince of Wales, entreating him to assume the exercise of the royal authority.

Lord Thurlow expressed extreme concern that any difference of opinion should be likely to arise on a question so peculiarly critical and delicate. He observed, that nothing he had yet heard gave satisfaction to his mind, and he therefore wished, previously to the declaration of his opinion, to have the full advantage of every precedent and every analogy that could be found. He added, however, that the doctrine maintained by Lord Loughborough was perfectly new to him, and that much stress could not surely be laid on a metaphorical expression, such as had been cited from Lord Coke. At the same time he commended that nobleman for having spoken of the Prince of Wales in the abstract, without affecting to rest any part of his argument on the personal virtues of the present heir-apparent, who should always have his applause when the expression of it would not be an act of impertinence.

The conduct of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in this delicate and embarrassing exigency, was such as did great credit to his judgment and principles. As soon as he found that the question of his right to the Regency, as stated by Mr. Fox, had excited considerable alarm in both Houses of Parliament, and throughout the nation in general, he anxiously endeavoured to avert the farther discussion of this delicate topic. For this purpose a declaration was made by Mr. Fox in the House of Commons, that the opinion he had delivered was in his private capacity, and without the Prince of Wales' authority; and the Duke of York, in the House of Peers, after a modest introduction, soliciting the indulgence of his hearers, as being unaccustomed to public speaking, said, 'that no claim of right had been made on the part of the Prince; and he was confident that his Royal Highness understood too well the sacred principles which seated the House of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain, ever to assume or exercise any power, be *his claim what it might*, not derived from *the will of the people*, expressed by their representatives, and their Lordships in parliament assembled. It was upon this ground that he must hope, that the wisdom and moderation of all considerate men, at a moment when temper and unanimity

were so peculiarly necessary, on account of the dreadful calamity which every description of persons must, in common, lament, but which he more particularly felt, would make them wish to avoid pressing a decision, which certainly was not necessary to the great object expected from parliament, and which, in the discussion, must be most painful to a family already sufficiently agitated and afflicted. Such,' his Royal Highness observed in conclusion, 'were the sentiments of an honest heart, equally influenced by duty and affection to his Royal father, and by attachment to the constitutional rights of his subjects; and he was confident that if his Royal brother were to address them, in his place, as a peer of the realm, these were the sentiments which he would distinctly avow.'

This declaration, which was confirmed by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, though it produced a very favourable impression, failed of preventing the further discussion of the question of the Prince's right to the Regency. Mr. Fox, in the House of Commons, strenuously disclaimed any assertion of right on the part of the Prince, but maintained his former opinion, '*that from the moment that the two Houses of Parliament declared the King unable to exercise the royal sovereignty, from that moment a right to exercise the royal authority, with all its functions, attached to the Prince of Wales, for the time such incapacity might exist.*'—'The idea,' to quote the words of Mr. Fox's biographer, 'which he meant to convey, was this, that the exercise of the royal authority was the *right*, under such circumstances, of the Prince of Wales, but he had spoken of it as a *right* and not a *possession*. Before the Prince could exercise that right, he must appeal to the court competent to decide whether it belonged to him or not, and from the adjudication of that court receive the possession. With the Lords and Commons of Great Britain rested the adjudication of the Prince of Wales' right, and by them he was to be put into possession. But, in considering this, they were not to exercise *discretion*, whether he was, or was not, the proper person to exercise that right, but whether or not he really had it; they were not then in the capacity to legislate, but only to judge; functions, which they all knew to be clearly distinct. The more clearly to understand this, it was neces-

sary to explain the precise meaning of the word *election*, and to contrast it with the term adjudication. That House could legislate and provide such measures as it deemed advisable for the public interest. When they individually gave their votes for such persons, whom they thought most proper to represent them in Parliament, they made their *election* of the representatives; but when they sat in a committee above stairs, to try whether A. or B. was entitled to a seat as representative for such or such a borough, they sat as judges, and their report was an *adjudication* of the right of A. or B.

‘In this situation did the House stand at present; they had not a legislative power, for the invigorating principle which gave life and action to that power was wanting. As the monarchy was, on every principle of the Constitution, hereditary, so, of consequence, was the exercise of the executive power; and the House, in its deliberation, was not at liberty to exercise its discretion, or to choose a parliamentary Regent; they were not to consider, whether they were about to make a *prudent election*, but bound to *pronounce a just judgment*.

‘He had, in terms the most explicit and unequivocal, asserted it as his opinion, that when that and the other House of Parliament declared his Majesty incapable of exercising the royal authority, that was the precise period when the Prince’s right attached, and when that House ought not to delay in restoring the royal authority. Had he not said, that the same principles which made the crown hereditary made the executive power and the government of the country hereditary likewise? Upon that ground it was, that he had argued as he had done, and that he conceived to be the nature of the Prince of Wales’ right. He could not therefore be supposed to mean, that the Prince would be justifiable, when the Houses were sitting, in taking upon himself the powers and authority of regent, until they were adjudged to him by Parliament. If there was no Parliament either sitting or existing, then, indeed, it would have been the duty of the Prince of Wales to have called a *convention* of the Lords and Commons; to whom the cause of their being so called might have been explained, and by whom his right, and the circumstances in which it originated, might be recognised; and that then being met by him, as exercising

the delegated functions of the royal power, they would become a legal parliament.

‘ Having thus, as he hoped, clearly explained his meaning, he was free to acknowledge, that more difference of opinion prevailed respecting the *right* of the Prince of Wales to exercise the royal authority, under the circumstances so often stated, than he could have expected ; but much of that difference of opinion, he found, arose from some *nice, logical, and legal distinctions, taken between the words right and claim* ; distinctions, in his mind, more equivocal than solid and substantial, and which were rested on arguments, which, he confessed, his understanding was too dull to comprehend. One idea he had learnt was, that it was allowed by some, that the Prince of Wales had an irresistible claim, which the Parliament could not reject nor refuse, whenever it was made, without forfeiting their duty to the Constitution. To that idea, he, for one, had no objection ; because he knew no difference between an irresistible claim, and an inherent right. In another place the *right* of the Prince of Wales had been gone into deeply, and that by persons every way qualified to discuss it, who gave all their sanction and authority to his opinion.

‘ If the Prince of Wales had done him the honour to have asked his advice how to proceed, he should have told him, as Parliament was assembled, that his Royal Highness might have sent a message to either House, or to both Houses of Parliament, stating his claim, and calling upon them to decide upon it. But, as he had said on a former day, his Royal Highness’ forbearance was such, that he would send his claim to neither House of Parliament ; but would wait patiently, and with due deference, being conscious that the two Houses ought to *find* that claim, and restore the royal authority. Mr. Fox said, he could not help thinking, that the conduct of his Royal Highness deserved the commendation he had bestowed on it, and was entitled to universal applause. He declared, he had sanguine hopes, that in the adjustment of a business of so delicate and important a nature, men of every description would have concurred in one leading and essential circumstance, viz.—that let there exist what doubt there might of the Prince of Wales’ *right* to exercise the royal authority, under the present circum-

stances of the country, there could be none of the propriety of investing him with the sole administration of government, and with the exercise of all the regal functions, powers, and prerogatives. His opinion, therefore, was, to declare his Royal Highness REGENT, for the purpose of exercising all the regal powers, in the same manner, and to the same extent, as they might have been exercised by his Majesty, had his health been such as to render him capable of continuing to exercise the royal authority.'

The spirited and well-informed writer from whom we have made the above extract, speaking of the situation of public affairs at this period, observes, with his usual force, that 'a variety of circumstances concurred to render the agitation of the Prince's right extremely ill-timed for the party with whom Mr. Fox acted. All public bodies are fond of power, and the Parliament of Great Britain being told by grave authority that they had a sceptre to bestow, with feelings very natural for a public body in such a predicament, were unwilling to waive so important a privilege. Another consideration was, the unpopularity of the Prince of Wales. His debts had been paid the preceding year to a large amount, and the minister had dexterously contrived that all the odium of that measure should rest with the confidential friends of the Prince. But what, perhaps, operated most to the disadvantage of the heir-apparent, was a serious report which prevailed at this time, and was credulously believed by many, whose situations in life gave them the opportunity of ascertaining the fact, that his Royal Highness had contracted a marriage, according to the rites of the Romish Church, with a Catholic lady. It was in vain that the friends of the Prince declared that the fact not only never could have happened legally, in consequence of the restrictions of the Royal Marriage Act, but never did happen in any way, and had from the beginning been a vile and malignant falsehood. Notwithstanding an explicit declaration to this effect was made in the House of Commons by Mr. Fox at the time when the Prince of Wales' debts were under consideration, it was far from removing suspicion; and many honest and well-meaning Members of Parliament, who otherwise probably would have voted for the Prince of Wales' absolute right to

the Regency, under a strong jealousy of this connexion, supported the proposition of the minister. Above all, the peculiar circumstances of popular delusion under which the House of Commons was convened, and which gave the minister so powerful an influence in that House, still existed in considerable force, and therefore any proposition proceeding from the distinguished leader of the opposition was certain to be received with the utmost circumspection and reserve.'

After the committee of the House of Commons had made their report on the subject of precedents, Mr. Pitt, emboldened by the support which his opinion had received in both Houses and out of doors, moved two resolutions of a declaratory nature, the first affirming that the personal exercise of the Royal authority was interrupted; and the second, that it was the duty of the two Houses of Parliament to provide the means of supplying that defect. These were agreed to, in spite of the most animated opposition, by a majority of 268 against 204; and were soon followed by a third resolution, declaring it to be necessary, for the purpose of supplying that defect, and maintaining entire the constitutional authority of the King, that the two Houses should determine on the means by which the Royal Assent might be given to the bill, which they might adopt for constituting a Regency. What the minister proposed was, that the Lord Chancellor should be empowered to put the great seal to any Act which the two Houses of Parliament might think proper to pass.

This resolution, which implied a monstrous fiction in itself, was attacked by Mr. Burke with the combined force of argument and ridicule. 'I consider myself,' said that great orator, 'as fully justified in asserting, that Great Britain is governed by an hereditary monarchy; it is so by the written, and the unwritten law; it is so by the very essence of our excellent Constitution; it is our own inheritance; it is our powerful barrier, our strong rampart against the ambition of mankind; it holds out an excellent lesson to the most aspiring; it says, *thus far shalt thou go, and no farther*. Yet we are taught by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that election alone constitutes the right of the Prince of Wales to assume the executive government during the King's incapacity. This is saying, in

other words, that any other individual has, in the present instance, as good a right to the throne as the House of Hanover. Is it possible for such monstrous opinions to be entertained? But at the present crisis, there is something very ungenerous in persisting in such sentiments. If we fight against the crown, let us fight against it fairly: when the monarch is seated on the throne, then the contest may be fair, and we act manfully; but what is to be done when the crown is in a *deliquium*? Are we to take a man with *a large brow* and *a big wig*? Is he a fit person? Trust none of the Royal family, for they will all rob the crown, because they are the relatives of the Sovereign; and in order to give a proper and legal sanction to our proceedings, we will give a fictitious assent to our own acts. This is called the *Royal assent*, without any intimation to the Royal person of any such assent, or to the illustrious personage who is to act for him. This is a glaring falsehood, a palpable absurdity! I do not approve of any robbery, house-breaking, highway-robbery, or any other felony: yet each of them is less inexcusable than law forgery. The great seal is to be affixed to a commission robbing the executive power of its due functions; a certain composition of wax and copper is to represent the monarch: this is a species of absurd metaphysics and absurd mechanics, a fiction so preposterous, that I do not see how it is possible to treat it otherwise than with contempt and ridicule; but the great effect which this absurdity is to have, makes it serious and important. I disclaim all allegiance—I renounce all obedience and loyalty to a King so chosen, and a crown so formed. I have given my allegiance already to the house of Hanover, to possess the power given by the Constitution. I worship the gods of our glorious Constitution; but I will not worship Priapus—I have the pleasure to coincide with the idea of my Right Honourable friend (Mr. Fox) concerning the right of the Prince of Wales. If the King be blind, dumb, lethargic, or apoplectic, there must be some person who is perfect, or else to whom do we owe our allegiance? Gentlemen on the other side seem to value themselves like antiquaries, who have a HOMER without a head, and thus the Constitution is made a MUSEUM.'

On another debate on the same topic, Mr. Burke again ex-

posed, with the most pointed ridicule, the absurd contrivance to enable the Lord Chancellor to put the great seal to the decision of the two branches only of the legislature. ‘I never heard,’ said he, ‘of a phantom being raised in a private family but for the purpose of robbing the house. So far from being a representative of the forms of the Constitution, it is a masquerade, a mummery, a piece of buffoonery, used to burlesque the Constitution, and to ridicule every form of government—a phantom conjured up to affright propriety, and to drive it from our isle—a hideous spectre, to which it might be said, in the words of Macbeth, to Banquo’s ghost—

Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless; thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes,
Which thou dost glare with.—

And so, in fact, it was with this political spectre; *its bones are marrowless; its blood is cold; it has no speculation in its eyes.* It is a chimera, a monster taken out of the depths of hell.’

Mr. Pitt, having, in one of those warm altercations that so frequently occurred at this period, denied that it was either a fraud, or a fiction, to employ the great seal as the organ of the King, under the sanction of the united wisdom of both Houses, Mr. Burke said, in reply, ‘that such a plan deserved a worse name than that of a fiction or phantom. They were going to create Milton’s monsters of Sin and Death—death to the constitution, and sin to the feelings of the country. What must be the progeny, but innumerable barking monsters, howling at, and endeavouring to destroy every principle of the constitution? They were going to steal the great seal—to commit a forgery and fraud—to support violence—and to carry them on to their climax of villainy. If the House wished to preserve unity in the empire, they ought to appoint a person who was interested in the empire to represent the King: they ought to trust, upon his word, the Prince of Wales, whom hereafter they must trust without; and thus they would save their country; and none would suffer but ambitious men. The danger which had been

talked of, if they were to address the Prince of Wales to take the regency upon him, reminded Mr. Burke of the giant, who used to swallow a dozen windmills for breakfast every morning, and was afterwards choked by a small bit of butter in July.*

* Mr. Burke's exertions in behalf of the Prince of Wales, at this period, were not confined to his speeches in the House of Commons, but he, likewise, employed his pen in vindicating the Prince's claim to the regency. Among the numberless attacks on Mr. Pitt, which appeared at this time, the keenest and the most unanswerable appeared in the form of 'Questions to Mr. Gill,' who had distinguished himself in the defence of administration. The following is a copy of those curious interrogatories, which were generally attributed to Mr. Burke, and, indeed, carry with them strong internal evidence of being the production of his mind.

'Do you not know, that the very same pretences, which are set up for excluding the royal family from the temporary representation of the crown, in giving assent to acts the most immediately concerning the exercise of the rights of the crown, may be used for depriving the whole House of Brunswick of the right of succession settled by law? Do you really think that the men of spirit in this country will tamely suffer themselves to be stripped of the inestimable security they have for all the blessings of the revolution, in order to turn this flourishing kingdom, under the false appearance of a republic, into a despotism for Mr. Pitt, and a job for you, and such as you?

'Do you not know that a man may live under this malady of madness for many years; and that the pretext of to-day may serve for the deceit of to-morrow; and that when the successor, after, perhaps, twenty years, comes to his empty name of inheritance, he will find the same conspiracy of wicked and ungrateful servants, strengthened by time and the perversion of all the favours of the crown, in full possession of power, so as hardly to leave him the name of a king?

'For that purpose did Pitt declare, that every individual in the kingdom (you, Mr. Gill, for instance) had as good a right to be elected regent as the Prince of Wales? Is not that position as false as it is invidious, insolent, and audacious?

'When did you, even in the most disorderly and distant times, hear that a Parliament was held, and the royal assent given, during the incapacity of the King, to any acts, except by the eldest prince of the blood, then of full age, and then in England?

'Is not the pretended grant of the regency to the Prince of Wales upon terms on which he cannot possibly exercise his trust without Pitt's consent—is not this avowedly giving the regency to Pitt?

Do you not know, as a fact, that Mr. Pitt has not only centred in himself the whole power of the crown as first minister, but has distributed, for power and profit, all the principal departments of the state, and every honour and distinction, among his own relations and kindred? Is not his cousin-german lord lieutenant of Ireland, with the whole patronage of that kingdom?—Is not General Pitt commander-in-chief there?—Is not his brother, Lord Chatham, first lord of the Admiralty, with all the patronage of the navy?—Is not Lord Sidney, Lord Chatham's father-in-law, principal secretary of state, with all the patronage of Canada, Nova Scotia, and all the West India islands?—Is not his cousin-german, Mr. Grenville, paymaster, with the reversion, on a very old life, of remembrancer in Ireland, a place for life of 3000*l.* a-year?—Is not his brother-in-law, Mr. Elliot, made by him clerk of the pells, a place of 1800*l.* a-year for life?—Was not his cousin, Lord Camelford, made a peer; and Lord Elliot, whose son had married his sister, a peer likewise?—Do you know to what length he would have gone, unless stopped by the King's malady?—And are you resolved he shall never be stopped?

'Do not those who compose the faction you support in both Houses consist of Pitt, Thurlow, Dundas, John Robinson, and a corrupt and degenerate confederacy

But, notwithstanding all the efforts of Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, and the other opposition orators, Mr. Pitt's resolutions were carried by triumphant majorities, through both Houses of Parliament. In the House of Peers the resolutions were debated with as much acrimony as in the House of Commons; and when they were finally carried, by a majority of 99 against 66, a spirited protest was entered on the lord's journals, signed by two princes of the blood (the Dukes of York and Cumberland), and forty-six peers of the realm.

The object of Mr. Pitt, which was to secure to his own party the lucrative places they held in the royal household, and thereby perpetuate his influence in the two Houses of Parliament, being now completely obtained, on the 30th of December he addressed the following letter to the Prince of Wales, containing the outlines of his plan of the proposed regency.

‘ Sir,

‘ The proceedings in Parliament being now brought to a point, which will render it necessary to propose to the House of Commons the particular measures to be taken for supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority during the present interval, and your Royal Highness having some time since signified your pleasure, that any communication on this subject should be in writing, I take the liberty of respectfully entreating your Royal Highness's permission to submit to your consideration the outlines of the plan, which his Majesty's confidential servants humbly conceive (according to the best judgment which they are able to form) to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

‘ It is their humble opinion, that your Royal Highness should be empowered to exercise the royal authority, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, during his Majesty's illness, and to do all acts, which might legally be done by his Majesty; with provisions, nevertheless, that the care of his Majesty's royal

of placemen, pensioners, jobbers, and old hacks of the court, and the rest of the supporters and betrayers of all parties for twenty-eight years; and are they not directly aiming to hold to themselves, by force, their places, pecuniary profits, power, and influence, at the risk of the destruction of the crown, and the ruin of the kingdom?’

person, and the management of the royal household, and the direction and appointment of the offices and servants therein, should be in the Queen, under such regulations as may be thought necessary.

‘ That the power to be exercised by your Royal Highness should not extend to the granting the real or personal property of the King (except as far as relates to the renewal of leases), to the granting of any office in reversion, or to the granting, for any other term than during his Majesty’s pleasure, any pension, or any other office whatever, except such as must by law be granted for life, or during good behaviour ; nor to the granting any rank or dignity of the peerage of this realm to any person except his Majesty’s issue, who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years.

‘ These are the chief points which have occurred to his Majesty’s servants. I beg leave to add, that their ideas are formed on the supposition that his Majesty’s illness is only temporary, and may be of no long duration. It may be difficult to fix beforehand the precise period for which these provisions ought to last ; but if, unfortunately, his Majesty’s recovery should be protracted to a more distant period than there is reason at present to imagine, it will be open hereafter to the wisdom of Parliament, to reconsider these provisions, whenever the circumstances appear to call for it.

‘ If your Royal Highness should be pleased to require any further explanation on the subject, and should condescend to signify your orders, that I should have the honour of attending your Royal Highness for that purpose, or to intimate any other mode in which your Royal Highness may wish to receive such explanation, I shall respectfully wait your Royal Highness’ commands.—I have the honour to be,

‘ With the utmost deference and submission,

‘ Sir,

‘ Your Royal Highness’ most dutiful

‘ and devoted servant,

‘ W. PITT.’

‘ *Downing Street, Tuesday Night,*

‘ *Dec. 30th, 1788.*’

To this communication, the Prince of Wales, not deeming it expedient to enter into a personal correspondence with Mr. Pitt, caused the following answer to be delivered to the Lord Chancellor,

‘ The Prince of Wales learns from Mr. Pitt’s letter, that the proceedings in Parliament are now in a train, which enables Mr. Pitt, according to the intimation in his former letter, to communicate to the Prince the outlines of the plan which his Majesty’s confidential servants conceive proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

‘ Concerning the steps already taken by Mr. Pitt, the Prince is silent. Nothing done by the two houses of Parliament can be a proper subject of his animadversion ; but when, previously to any discussion in Parliament, the outlines of a scheme of government are sent for his consideration, in which it is proposed that he shall be personally and principally concerned, and by which the royal authority and public welfare may be deeply affected, the Prince would be unjustifiable, were he to withhold an explicit declaration of his sentiments. His silence might be construed into a previous approbation of a plan, the accomplishment of which every motive of duty to his father and sovereign, as well as of regard for the public interest, obliges him to consider as injurious to both.

‘ In the state of deep distress in which the Prince and the whole royal family were involved, by the heavy calamity which has fallen upon the King, and at a moment when government, deprived of its chief energy and support, seemed peculiarly to need the cordial and united aid of all descriptions of good subjects, it was not expected by the Prince, that a plan should be offered to his consideration, by which government was to be rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in the hands of any person intended to represent the King’s authority, much less in the hands of his eldest son, the heir-apparent of his kingdom, and the person most bound to the maintenance of his Majesty’s just prerogatives and authority, as well as most interested in the happiness, the prosperity, and the glory of the people.

‘ The Prince forbears to remark on the several parts of the sketch of the plan laid before him ; he apprehends it must

have been formed with sufficient deliberation to preclude the possibility of any arguments of his producing an alteration of sentiment in the projectors of it. But he trusts, with confidence, to the wisdom and justice of Parliament, when the whole of this subject, and the circumstances connected with it, shall come under their deliberation.

‘He observes, therefore, only generally on the heads communicated by Mr. Pitt—and it is with deep regret the Prince makes the observation, that he sees in the contents of that paper a project for producing weakness, disorder, and insecurity in every branch of the administration of affairs—a project for dividing the royal family from each other, for separating the court from the state; and therefore, by disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support, a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to the Prince all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public, by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity.

‘The Prince’s feelings on contemplating this plan, are also rendered still more painful to him, by observing that it is not founded on any general principles, but is calculated to infuse jealousies and suspicions (wholly groundless, he trusts) in that quarter, whose confidence it will ever be the first pride of his life to merit and obtain.

‘With regard to the motive and object of the limitations and restrictions proposed, the Prince can have but little to observe. No light or information is offered him by his Majesty’s ministers on these points. They have informed him what the powers are which they mean to refuse him, not why they are withheld.

‘The Prince, however, holding as he does, that it is an undoubted and fundamental principle of this constitution, that the powers and prerogatives of the crown are vested there, as a trust for the benefit of the people; and that they are sacred only as they are necessary to the preservation of that poise and balance of the constitution, which experience has proved to be the true security of the liberty of the subject, must be allowed to observe, that the plea of public utility ought to be

strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power or its representative ; or which can justify the Prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment shall be made, to ascertain with how small a portion of the kingly power the executive government of this country may be carried on.

‘ The Prince has only to add, that if security for his Majesty’s repossessing his rightful government, whenever it shall please Providence, in bounty to the country, to remove the calamity with which he is afflicted, be any part of the object of this plan, the Prince has only to be convinced that any measure is necessary, or even conducive, to that end, to be the first to urge it as the preliminary and paramount consideration of any settlement in which he would consent to share.

‘ If attention to what is presumed might be his Majesty’s feelings and wishes on the happy day of his Majesty’s recovery, be the object, it is with the truest sincerity the Prince expresses his firm conviction, that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his royal father, than the knowledge, that the government of his son and representative had exhibited the sovereign power of the realm in a state of degradation, of curtailed authority, and diminished energy—a state hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good government of his people, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the monarch and the rights of his family.

‘ Upon that part of the plan which regards the King’s real and personal property, the Prince feels himself compelled to remark, that it was not necessary for Mr. Pitt, nor proper to suggest to the Prince, the restraints he proposes against the Prince’s granting away the King’s real and personal property. The Prince does not conceive, that, during the King’s life, he is, by law, entitled to make any such grant ; and he is sure, that he has never shewn the smallest inclination to possess any such power. But it remains with Mr. Pitt to consider the eventual interests of the royal family, and to provide a proper and natural security against the mismanagement of them by others.

‘ The Prince has discharged an indispensable duty, in those



giving his free opinion on the plan submitted for his consideration.

‘ His conviction of the evils which may arise to the King’s interests, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs, in the Prince’s mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful task imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the King’s subjects he deplotes the most), in full confidence that the affection and loyalty to the King, the experienced attachment to the house of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished this nation, will carry him through the many difficulties inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the King, and with advantage to the public.

(Signed) ‘ G. P.’

‘ *Carlton House, January 2, 1789.*’

Dangerous as their plan seemed to be in theory, and hostile to the true spirit of the constitution, ministers were encouraged to proceed with it, by the addresses that were presented to them from various parts of the kingdom, expressive of the gratitude of the persons by whom they were sent for the assertion which had been made by the House of Commons of their right of providing for the present deficiency.

On the 16th of January Mr. Pitt opened his propositions to the House of Commons. He began by observing, that he should make no alteration in what he had intended to suggest, and stated as the ground of their proceedings, that the King’s recovery was more probable than the contrary, and that the greatest length to which the malady was ordinarily known to extend was a year and a half or two years, the shortest three months, and the average five or six. Such was the decisive opinion of Dr. Willis, who, of all the King’s physicians, was most entitled to credit, as having had the greatest experience in this particular disorder, and being most constant in his attendance upon his patient. Mr. Pitt adverted to the Regency

bills of Queen Ann, of King George I., and King George II., where, the circumstance in contemplation being a minority, the prospect of a more certain and longer delegation of power was afforded than in the present instance. In each of these cases, the powers of the crown had been lodged not in a single hand, but in a great variety of persons. He had himself considerable doubts whether these bills were well adapted to the circumstances of the times in which they had passed, and, accordingly, was firmly of opinion, that the political power should be intrusted by Parliament to one individual. But as the delegated authority had been in former instances restricted by the mode in which it was distributed, so he deemed it more especially right in the present, that it should have certain limitations. He reasoned particularly upon the limitation respecting the peerage, and contended that it could scarcely be maintained, that the want of such an incentive for a few months was likely to deprive the country of the service of its meritorious citizens. The prerogative of creating peers was of a very delicate nature, since an honour of this sort was permanent, and when once bestowed, could not be revoked. As an instance of its possible abuse, Mr. Pitt desired to make the supposition of such a confederacy and cabal (the minister here evidently alluded to the coalition) being formed, as had been convicted, a few years since, of a design to overthrow the Constitution, alleging, that by such persons they might expect the Regent to be advised to create so great a number of peers, as would considerably embarrass the crown in carrying on the government, when the King should again be restored to his regal capacity.

The last proposition, Mr. Pitt said, was not the less important and indispensable. Without investing the Queen with the control of the household, she could not properly discharge the guardianship, which they were unanimously disposed to commit to her care. It was impossible to suppose that the influence arising from this patronage could operate to the disadvantage of the Regent's administration. For a moment to harbour the idea would be equally romantic and indecent. He believed no man would venture to charge blame of any kind upon this great personage, who had lived almost thirty years in

the country, a pattern of domestic affection, tenderness, and virtue, against whom the breath of calumny had not dared to utter a whisper, and who could not merit it at a moment of such complicated affliction. The Master of the Horse indeed, the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord Steward of the Household, and others, were by many thought high officers of state ; but the fact was otherwise. They were the menial servants of the crown, essential to its dignity and splendour. He urged it to the House, as a matter of humanity and loyalty, not to interfere with the King's domestic arrangements. What, he asked, must that great personage feel, when he waked from the trance of his faculties, and asked for his attendants, if he were told, that his subjects had taken advantage of his momentary absence of mind, and stripped him of the symbols of his personal elevation? Mr. Pitt added, that he was sensible of what was due to the Regent, who ought to have a retinue adequate to the importance of his station. He meant to propose such a retinue, and he was confident, that, though it might involve some additional expense, it would cheerfully and unreluctantly be contributed by that House.

The arguments of the minister were attacked with great energy by Lord North, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Fox, and others. Lord North particularly controverted Mr. Pitt's description of the great officers of the household. They might, observed his Lordship, in the time of King George II., have been intimately connected with the interior of the palace, and been, in the strict sense of the word, domestics of the sovereign ; but it was well known that of late years the Lords of the Bedchamber had been otherwise employed. They were indeed the political servants of the crown, not appointed for the domestic convenience of the monarch, but for his public pomp, being a part of the pageantry annexed to his office, and a source of the influence which it was intended to maintain among the people at large.

Mr. Sheridan declared that the minister had discovered in one part of his speech the true motives of his conduct, when he had stated his apprehensions, that the government would fall into the hands of those persons, who he had dared to assert had been convicted of a conspiracy to overturn the Constitu-

tion. This was the real spring of Mr. Pitt's measures. Had the Regent intended to have kept the present ministers in office, the limitations, he verily believed, would never have been heard of. The whole of Mr. Pitt's conduct was confessedly governed by party considerations, and the impulse of his personal ambition. He had talked of the evil advisers to whom the Regent might possibly be exposed. But was there in fact any reason to dread such a circumstance? If it occurred, was there not vigour enough left in that House, to crush any attempts at the abuse of authority, to call bad ministers to a severe account, and address the Regent to remove them from his councils?

Mr. Pitt had more than once wantonly attacked that side of the House, as containing a political party. He made no scruple to declare, that he thought it the glory and honour of his life to belong to that party. Was it a disgrace to have been formed under the Marquess of Rockingham, and under his banners to have combated with success in the cause of the people? Was it a disgrace to be connected with the Duke of Portland, a nobleman, who, actuated solely by the desire of the public welfare, dedicated himself unremittingly to the service of his country? Of Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan remarked, that it was his characteristic distinction, fully to possess himself of the affection of all those who were in habits of intercourse with him, and to force them by the most powerful and amiable sort of compulsion to participate in his fortune. With respect to his talents, he would not speak of them. They could derive no additional lustre from the most sanguine panegyric of the most enlightened of his friends. Thus much he only would observe, with regard to the extent of his mind and the keenness of his understanding, that it was the best proof of any other man's talents to be able to comprehend the enlargement and feel the superiority of those of his friend. He regarded the friendship of such a man as the greatest happiness that could befall him; and he desired to know whether the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox were the less worthy of the confidence of their country, or the more unfit to become ministers, because an arrogant individual chose presumptuously to load them with calumny. Mr. Sheridan condemned, in the strongest terms, the idea of reserv-

ing the patronage of the household, which could answer no other purpose but what Mr. Pitt had unjustly charged upon Mr. Fox, the erecting a fortress, from which, when out of office, he might successfully counteract the measures of administration. The pretence, that the feelings of the King would be shocked when he recovered and found his household changed, was ridiculous. The bad advisers of the Regent were to be allowed the power of making war and peace, and alliances, and exerting various other important prerogatives. To talk, therefore, of the feelings of the King, as Mr. Pitt did, was to suppose that he would be less shocked to learn, that the constitution of the Government was changed, part of his dominions ceded to foreign potentates, and a thousand calamities and disgraces entailed upon his country, than be informed of the most trivial alteration in his domestic arrangements. Mr. Sheridan concluded a brilliant speech, with describing the ex-minister, as coming down to the House in state, with the cap of liberty upon the end of a white staff, a retinue of black and white sticks attending him, and an army of beef-eaters to clear his way through the lobby.

In the House of Peers, the ministerial resolutions were destined to experience an opposition equally resolute, and equally ineffectual. A speech intended to have been spoken by the Duke of York on the occasion, but which, for some reason or other, was not delivered, is, in itself, so beautiful a composition, and, according to our ideas, comes so near up to what were the sentiments of the Prince of Wales, and the other branches of his illustrious family, in this melancholy dilemma of the royal house, that we feel no hesitation in laying it before our readers. It appeared in the newspapers of the day, under the title of ‘A Speech, intended to have been delivered by his Royal Highness the Duke of York, in the Debate on the Regency Bill.’

‘My Lords,

My wishes would lead me to take no part at all in the debates on this bill; but to submit myself implicitly to your lordships’ discretion. But the point to which matters have been brought, does not leave it in my own choice whether I shall speak, or whether I shall be silent.

‘ I see the children of the king separated from their father—the mother alienated from her offspring—the whole royal family degraded and excluded, not from their rank and situation only, but from the first and dearest privileges of nature. The children and brothers of his Majesty are excluded from any share as principals, or even by participation and advice, in the care of the King. We have been rejected one by one, and name by name; this, my Lords, I own, sinks deep into my mind.

‘ From the very beginning of these transactions, I thought that the intention of those who have taken the lead in them could not be mistaken. They began by *a formal declaration of right*, so perfectly uncalled for, that it could not (as I then conceived) have any other purpose than that of conveying to the world an opinion that the Prince of Wales had questioned the just powers of Parliament, or had maintained a claim to the regency, independent of the recognition of the two houses.

‘ Whatever the views might be of those who brought it forward, it was impossible that I should consider it in any other light than as a scheme to throw unmerited suspicion on the Prince of Wales, and to prejudice him in the opinions and hearts of the people. These I am sure my brother thinks his best inheritance; and that the regency, and even the throne, or a greater throne, if such there were, are nothing without them.

‘ I was authorized by the Prince of Wales to disavow any such claim on his part, and faithfully executed my commission. I did it with the greater cheerfulness, because the opinion of the Prince of Wales was exactly my own. But your Lordships well remember in what manner, and on what principles, that measure was persevered in. The gratitude of his Majesty’s servants, with I know not what appeal to heaven, was set in opposition to the gratitude, the duty, and natural affection of all his children and both his Majesty’s brothers, in order to justify a declaration which struck obliquely at the honour of all his Majesty’s family*.

* In this part of his speech his Royal Highness evidently meant to allude to what had fallen from Lord Thurlow on a former day. In answer to the speech delivered by the Royal Duke in an early stage of the discussion, and to which we have already had occasion to refer, the chancellor observed, ‘that his feelings were rendered more poignant, from having been in the habit of personally re-

‘ Your Lordships well know that this exclusion is not warranted by precedent; and that this is undoubtedly the first instance of such a trust in this, or probably in any country from which the Princes of the blood have all been rejected.

‘ The exclusion, therefore, cannot be referred to any general principle; but must of necessity, and in the fair construction of all men, come home to some ground of disqualification, and some circumstances of distrust, personal and peculiar to ourselves.

‘ When I look to the shocking nature of the suspicion, on which our expulsion is grounded, your Lordships would think me unpardonable, if I did not rise, in the face of the world, to assert the honour of a family, which till now has never been impeached, and for which the British Parliament and the British nation have been used to express affection and respect.

‘ My Lords, it is not to be expected that I should condescend to purge myself or any of my family of the suspicion of attempting the life or prolonging the malady of my parent, if we were suffered to be even in the remote character of an adviser in the care of his person—I cannot brook the thought that I should be called to do so. I do not rise to clear myself and my blood from so scandalous an imputation—I rise to demand your Lordships’ protection and justice against a monstrous oppression.

‘ My father, my Lords, did not suspect me of parricide. I have ever honoured him; and I had reason to think I pos-

ceiving various marks of indulgence and kindness from the suffering monarch. His debt of gratitude to his Majesty was ample, for the many favours his Majesty had graciously bestowed upon him, which *when he forgot, might God forget him.*’ Mr. Burke alluding to this celebrated speech, and to another by the same noble person, in which he compared the King to the unfortunate Darius,

‘ Deserted in his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed,’

observed with a mixture of sarcasm and ridicule, that ‘ the theatrical tears which were shed on these occasions, were not the tears of patriots for dying laws—but of lords for their expiring places. The iron tear that flowed down Pluto’s cheek, rather resembled the bubbling of the Styx, than the gentle murmuring stream of Aganippe. In fact, they were tears for his Majesty’s bread; yet those, who shed them, would stick by the King’s loaf, as long as a single cut of it remained; they would fasten to the hard crust, and gnaw it, while two crumbs of it held together; and what was more extraordinary, they would proudly declare at the time, that it was the honour of the service, and the dignity of their offices, which they regarded; and that, as to the emolument, they did not value the money *three skips of a louse.* This was gratitude, a degree of gratitude which courtiers never failed to exhibit.’
—*Mem. of the late Right Hon. C.J. Fox*, p. 272.

sessed a large share indeed of his tenderness, from the earliest period of my own memory, to that fatal hour in which his has been interrupted. If God in his mercy to the King, and his children, and his people, should restore that memory, and should revive the affections of his heart, I have no reason to think he will applaud the authors of my disgrace, or account those his friends who have branded his children and his brothers with the suspicion of murder and rebellion. All this is pretended to be done for the King: but it is no great presumption in me to assert, that I know, and can speak the sentiments of my father as authentically as any of the creatures of his favour.

‘ My Lords, I have the honour of being a member of another great body, as well as of this. With what face can I show myself to a commonwealth of Princes, and to a people subjected to me, when I am thus disgraced in a country that gave me birth? I am a Prince of the empire—I am the son of your King. If these should be no titles to justice, I am a Peer of Parliament, and have a right to defend myself in this House. If I am stripped of all these, there is one character dearer to me than all the rest, I am an Englishman, and am entitled freely to contend for my rights.

‘ I pity the situation of the Prince of Wales. He must suffer much in silence. It is the unhappy prerogative of greatness. But care is taken in this bill that he shall not waste the King’s property. I know he never desired to have power over it. If he had, I know the King’s property could not be in safer hands; and this is the unanimous sentiment of the whole family. If we were to choose a trustee, he should be our trustee, in preference to all the world. Happy in his protection, secure in his love, the family would find their honour in his glory, their provision in his wealth, their opulence in his bounty. We know his integrity—we are conscious of his heart. He never meddled with the King’s property but to secure it, and to secure it in a manner the most prudent and most honourable. For this there are witnesses in this House, if they choose on this occasion to do justice. More might be told. For my share in any (I pray God most remote) eventual interest in that property, I regard it not at all. I am wounded in

a more tender part—but I have brothers and sisters who cannot speak for themselves.’

Why this admirable address was not delivered by the Duke of York, in his place, in the House of Peers, it perhaps would be superfluous now to inquire; but the probable reason was, a certain degree of timidity and indecision among the friends of the Prince's party, and some manifest symptoms of approaching convalescence, which enabled the medical politicians of the day to prognosticate that the indisposition of the King could not be of any long duration. There is indeed every reason to suppose, that it was this persuasion, from the first intimation of the King's malady, which induced the friends of Mr. Pitt to adhere so firmly to the interests of that minister, and in this they were justified not only by the event, but from previous calculations drawn from the mass of people afflicted with the same disease. On the other hand, the opposition seemed to consider the King's recovery as a distant, if not a problematical event, and therefore they wished to provide for the full and vigorous exercise of the royal authority, till the capacity of the sovereign was sufficiently restored to enable him to resume the functions of his high office. The opposition were anxious to preserve the constitution in its purity, and conceiving that this could not be done without granting to the Regent the same powers and prerogatives that the King was possessed of, and to which the Prince would have been entitled had he succeeded to the supreme power by a natural demise, with an honourable consistency of principle, and attachment to the pure spirit of the constitution, resisted at every step the limitations and restrictions with which, manifestly for the purpose of party ambition, it was proposed to clog the regency of the Prince of Wales.

The minister of this period was a man of unbounded arrogance, and surrounded by a base and servile host of dependants and sycophants, to whom he too often, certainly not from the easiness of his temper, but from the necessities of his circumstances, surrendered up his better judgment. All the events of this period may be traced to the intrigues and cabals of the low-minded and interested individuals with whom he

was connected, and the whole scheme of the regency was a plan (we had nearly said a plot) to continue Mr. Pitt and his friends in the most essential, important, and lucrative offices of government.

After several ineffectual attempts on the part of the friends of the Prince of Wales to modify the restrictions of the regency bill, and to invest his royal highness with superior powers, the two houses of parliament agreed to the following resolutions, which were presented by a deputation of peers and commoners to the Prince, on the 30th of January, 1789.

‘ Resolved, that for the purpose of providing for the exercise of the royal authority, during the continuance of his Majesty’s illness, in such manner, and to such extent, as the present circumstances and the urgent concerns of the nation appear to require, it is expedient that his royal Highness the Prince of Wales, being resident within the realm, shall be empowered to exercise and administer the royal authority, according to the laws and constitution of Great Britain, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, under the style and title of Regent of the kingdom; and to use, execute, and perform, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, all authorities, prerogatives, acts of government, and administration of the same, which belong to the king of this realm to use, exercise, and perform, according to the laws thereof, subject to such limitations and exceptions as shall be provided.

‘ Resolved, that the power so to be given to his royal highness the Prince of Wales shall not extend to the granting of any rank or dignity of the peerage of the realm to any person whatever, except to his Majesty’s royal issue, who shall have attained the full age of twenty-one years.

‘ Resolved, that the said powers should not extend to the granting of any office whatever in reversion, or to the granting of any office, salary, or pension, for any other term than during his Majesty’s pleasure, except such offices as are by law required to be granted for life, or during good behaviour.

‘ Resolved that the said powers should not extend to the granting of any part of his Majesty’s real or personal estate, except so far as relates to the renewal of leases.

‘ Resolved, that the care of his Majesty’s royal person, during

the continuance of his Majesty's illness, should be committed to the Queen's most excellent Majesty; and that her Majesty should have power to remove from, and to nominate and appoint such persons as she shall think proper, to the several offices in his Majesty's household; and to dispose, order, and manage all other matters and things relating to the care of his Majesty's royal person, during the time aforesaid: and that for the better enabling her Majesty to discharge this important trust, it is also expedient that a council should be appointed, to advise and assist her Majesty in the several matters aforesaid, and with power from time to time, as there may be cause, to examine upon oath the physicians and others attending his Majesty's person, touching the state of his Majesty's health, and all matters relative thereto.'

Die Mercurii, 28 Januarii, 1789.

'Resolved, that a committee be appointed, to attend his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, with the resolutions which have been agreed to by the Lords and Commons for the purpose of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority during his Majesty's illness, by empowering his Royal Highness to exercise such authority in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, subject to the limitations and restrictions which the circumstances of the case appear at present to require: and that the committee do express the hope which the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, entertain, that his Royal Highness, from his regard to the interests of his Majesty and the nation, will be ready to undertake the weighty and important trust proposed to be invested in his Royal Highness, as soon as an act of Parliament shall have been passed for carrying the said resolution into effect.'

To this communication, the Prince of Wales was pleased to make the following answer:—

'MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

'I thank you for communicating to me the resolutions agreed upon by the two Houses, and I request you to assure them in my name, that my duty to the King, my father, and my anxious concern for the safety and interests of the people, which must be endangered by a longer suspension of the ex-

ercise of the royal authority, together with my respect for the united desires of the two Houses, outweigh, in my mind, every other consideration, and will determine me to undertake the weighty and important trust proposed to me, in conformity to the resolutions now communicated to me. I am sensible of the difficulties that must attend the execution of this trust, in the particular circumstances in which it is committed to my charge, of which, as I am acquainted with no former example, my hope of a successful administration cannot be founded on any past experience. But confiding that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority, deemed necessary for the present, have been approved by the two Houses only as a temporary measure, founded on the loyal hope, in which I ardently participate, that his Majesty's disorder may not be of long duration, and trusting, in the meanwhile, that I shall receive a zealous and united support in the two Houses, and in the nation, proportioned to the difficulty attending the discharge of my trust in this interval, I will entertain the pleasing hope, that my faithful endeavours to preserve the interests of the King, his crown, and people, may be successful.'

While the two Houses of the legislature of Great Britain were thus employed in framing limitations and restrictions, to fetter the power of the Prince Regent, and cramp the exercise of the royal authority within narrower bounds than any sovereign of the country had ever submitted to, the Parliament of Ireland pursued a very different course, and it was agreed by both Houses, though not without considerable opposition, and very spirited protests being entered upon the journals, that the regency of the kingdom of Ireland should be conferred on his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, during the continuance of his Majesty's indisposition. An address to that effect was accordingly prepared, and the Lord Lieutenant (the Marquess of Buckingham) was requested to convey it to England, but refused to do so, under the impression that his official duty, and the oath he had taken as chief governor of Ireland, obliged him to decline transmitting such a document. The two Houses of Parliament, upon this, passed a vote of censure upon the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant, and appointed delegates from each house, with the Duke of Leinster, the first peer of Ireland,

at their head, to wait upon the Prince of Wales, with the following address, which was presented to his Royal Highness on the 27th of February.

'To His Royal Highness George, Prince of Wales.

'The humble address of the lords spiritual and temporal, and knights, citizens, and burgesses, in parliament assembled.

'May it please your Royal Highness.

'We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Royal Highness, with hearts full of the most loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of your royal father, and to express the deepest and most grateful sense of the numerous blessings which we have enjoyed under that illustrious house whose accession to the throne of these realms has established civil and constitutional liberties upon a basis which, we trust, will never be shaken; and at the same time to condole with your Royal Highness upon the grievous malady with which it has pleased Heaven to afflict the best of sovereigns.

'We have, however, the consolation of reflecting, that this severe calamity hath not been visited upon us until the virtues of your Royal Highness have been so matured as to enable your Royal Highness to discharge the duties of an important trust, for the performance whereof the eyes of all his Majesty's subjects of both kingdoms are directed to your Royal Highness.

'We therefore humbly beg leave to request, that your Royal Highness will be pleased to take upon you the government of this realm during the continuance of his Majesty's present indisposition, and no longer; and under the style and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, to exercise and administer, according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdictions, and prerogatives, to the crown and government thereof belonging.'

'To this address, so conformable to the frank, generous, and liberal temper of the Irish nation, and so honourable to the Prince of Wales, for the confidence which it reposed in his

character and principles, his Royal Highness returned the following answer

‘MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

‘The address from the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Ireland, which you have presented to me, demands my warmest and earliest thanks. If anything could add to the esteem and affection I have for the people of Ireland, it would be the loyal and dutiful attachment to the person and government of the King my father, manifested in the address of the two houses.

‘What they have done, and their manner of doing it, is a new proof of their undiminished duty to his Majesty, of their uniform attachment to the house of Brunswick, and their constant attention to maintain inviolate the concord and connexion between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, so indispensably necessary to the prosperity, the happiness, and the liberties of both.

‘If, in conveying my grateful sentiments on their conduct, in relation to the King my father, and to the inseparable interests of the two kingdoms, I find it impossible to express adequately my feelings on what relates to myself, I trust you will not be the less disposed to believe that I have the understanding to comprehend the value of what they have done, a heart that must remember, and principles that will not suffer me to abuse their confidence.

‘But the fortunate change which has taken place in the circumstance which gave occasion to the address agreed to by the lords and commons of Ireland, induces me to delay, for a few days, giving a final answer; trusting that the joyful event of his Majesty’s resuming the personal exercise of his royal authority may then render it only necessary for me to repeat those sentiments of gratitude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland, which I feel indelibly impressed on my heart.’

The King at this period was daily advancing towards a state of convalescence; but the Irish delegates continued some time longer in town, to wait the issue of this extraordinary conjuncture, and oftener than once were honoured by the Prince with

invitations to partake of the hospitalities of Carlton-house. On one of these occasions, there were present the Dukes of York and Cumberland, the Dukes of Portland and Devonshire, Earl Fitzwilliam, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, &c., to the number of thirty-six. The party was most happily convivial, to which the engaging manners of the Prince not a little contributed. On the company rising, his Royal Highness insisted on *the Landlord's Bottle*: this meeting with some little objection, was afterwards assented to from an observation of Mr. Burke, who said that, although he was an enemy in general to indefeasible right, yet he thought the Prince, in his own house, had a right to rule, *jure de vino* (by right of wine, or the divine right).

At length, the King's perfect recovery being no longer a matter of doubt, the Prince of Wales, on the 12th of March, delivered his final answer to the deputation from both houses of the parliament of Ireland, in the following terms.

‘MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

‘The happy event of the King's recovery, and the consequent reassumption of the exercise of his auspicious government, announced by his royal commission for declaring the further causes of holding the parliament of Great Britain, has done away the melancholy necessity which gave rise to the arrangement proposed by the parliament of Ireland; but nothing can obliterate from my memory and my gratitude the principles upon which that arrangement was made, and the circumstances by which it was attended.

‘I consider your generous kindness to his Majesty's royal family, and the provision you made for preserving the authority of the crown in its constitutional energy, as the most unequivocal proof which could be given of your affectionate loyalty to the King, at the time when, by an afflicting dispensation of Providence, his government had suffered an intermission, and his house was deprived of its natural protector.

‘I shall not pay so ill a compliment to the Lords and Commons of Ireland, as to suppose that they were mistaken in their reliance on the moderation of my views, and the purity of my intentions. A manly confidence, directing the manner of

proceeding towards those who entertain sentiments becoming the high situation to which they are born, furnishes the most powerful motives to the performance of their duty; at the same time that the liberality of sentiment, which, in conveying a trust, confers an honour, can have no tendency to relax that provident vigilance, and that public jealousy, which ought to watch over the exercise of power.

‘ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

‘ Though full of joy for the event which enables me to take leave of you in this manner, personally, I cannot but regret your departure. I have had the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of your private characters, and it has added to the high esteem which I had before entertained for you on account of your public merits: both have made you the worthy representatives of the great bodies to which you belong.

‘ I am confident that I need not add my earnest recommendation to the Parliament and people of Ireland, to continue to cultivate the harmony of the two kingdoms, which, in their mutual perfect freedom, will find the closest as well as happiest bond of their connexion.’

On this subject we shall make but a few brief remarks. In regard to the right of the Prince of Wales to the regency, we consider it to have been clear and indubitable, and we do not hesitate to say, that the conduct of his Royal Highness, on that most trying and delicate occasion, was manly, consistent, and honourable, becoming his duty as a son, and worthy of his character as a prince. Had the Prince of Wales succeeded to the regency under all the restrictions and limitations proposed, it is scarcely possible but that his government must have fallen into confusion and disorder. What was asked for him was no more than what the exigencies of the state required, and the powers which the constitution would have given him in the case of a natural demise. Indeed, it is impossible to review the transactions of this period without feeling for what must have been the sensations of the Prince of Wales at the treatment he received from an arrogant and supercilious minister, deemed

unworthy to be trusted with the temporary occupation of the throne; every restraint that jealousy or suspicion could devise was resorted to, to fetter and circumscribe his authority. Happily for the Prince of Wales, he was not called upon to undertake the government under such mortifying and humiliating circumstances, and the nation was spared the danger of an experiment full of difficulty and hazard.

The last document which we shall present to our readers, relative to the transactions of this interesting and memorable period, is a letter, which was transmitted to the Queen by the Prince of Wales, in his own name, and that of the Duke of York, who, on the report of the King's convalescence, and after the Lord Chancellor had several interviews with his Majesty, applied in vain to be admitted to the royal presence. In consequence of this, the following representation, or remonstrance, was drawn up, and sent with the signatures of the royal brothers to the Queen:—

‘ Your Majesty’s most dutiful son, the Prince of Wales, most humbly begs leave to represent to your Majesty the following circumstances:—

‘ It has for some days been confidently reported, and is generally credited, that his Majesty is happily restored to health; though that health is not yet perfectly confirmed. It must be on a supposition of this fact, that the Lord Chancellor has been introduced into his Majesty’s presence.

‘ That the Prince of Wales, with the Duke of York, have frequently made most respectful and dutiful applications to be permitted to see the King their father; but that they have met with a refusal, on the idea that his Majesty was by no means in a condition to be approached by them, without the danger of affecting his sensibility in such a manner as to renew or increase his illness.

‘ They beg leave to inform your Majesty, that, in such a moment, the Prince claims a right to see his father, as a gratification due to his feelings as a son. The Prince claims access to his Majesty in right of his birth. He claims, at fitting times, and with proper precautions, an audience of the King, as being actually nominated by a bill, which has passed

the House of Commons, for the arduous and delicate trust of his Majesty's government during his illness.

‘The rule of the Prince of Wales’ conduct must, in a great measure, be formed upon an accurate idea of his Majesty’s condition. He apprehends that he owes it to his Majesty, and to his Majesty’s faithful subjects, to do all that in his power lies, that no man shall make use of his Majesty’s name whilst he labours under illness, which may redound to the detriment of his Majesty’s government—which may, against his will, and by surprise, possibly tend to the dishonour and disadvantage of his family.

‘Her Majesty will naturally expect that the Prince of Wales should be exceedingly anxious and apprehensive, lest, if he and the Duke of York should not see the King (though they may be, against their wishes, excluded from his Majesty’s presence); that circumstance might be hereafter employed by persons not well disposed to your Majesty, or to them, to prejudice his Majesty’s mind against them, as deficient in reverence, duty, and natural affection.

‘If it be thought that their seeing his Majesty might agitate his mind, and retard his recovery, the Prince is sure that the same reason might be urged with regard to the Chancellor, who, in his character of minister, must naturally remind the King of affairs of state, and renew in his mind the cares and anxieties of his government.

‘The Prince of Wales desires and requests, as guarantees and witnesses of the prudent use which he and the Duke of York will certainly make of this visit of duty and respect, the presence of two or more of the attending physicians, provided that all persons who may operate on the King’s mind, by restraint, be not present.

‘The Prince of Wales entreats, that if the physicians should be of opinion that his Majesty’s state of health will not safely permit the desired interview, the Prince, for his future justification with the King, may receive that opinion in writing, signed by them.

‘The Duke of York most humbly supplicates your Majesty for the same indulgence, in paying his humble and affectionate duty to the King his father.’

The recovery of his Majesty was announced to Mr. Pitt in the following manner:—On the 23d of February, 1789, Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville were dining with Lord Chesterfield, when a letter was brought to the former, which he read, and, sitting next to Lord Melville, gave it him under the table, and whispered, that when he had looked at it, it would be better for them to talk it over in Lord Chesterfield's dressing-room. This proved to be a letter in the King's own hand, announcing his recovery to Mr. Pitt, in terms somewhat as follows:—

‘The King renews, with great satisfaction, his communication with Mr. Pitt, after the long suspension of their intercourse, owing to his very tedious and painful illness. He is fearful that, during this interval, the public interests have suffered great inconvenience and difficulty.

‘It is most desirable that immediate measures should be taken for restoring the functions of his government; and Mr. Pitt will consult with the Lord Chancellor to-morrow morning, upon the most expedient means for that purpose. And the King will receive Mr. Pitt at Kew, afterwards, about one o'clock.’

There could be no hesitation on the part of Mr. Pitt; and having held the necessary conference with the Chancellor, he waited upon the King at the appointed time. He found him perfectly of sound mind, and in every respect as before his illness, competent to all the affairs of his public station.

This was the first notice, in any way, which Mr. Pitt received of this most important event: the reports of the physicians had indeed been of late more favourable; but Lord Melville verily believed there was not a man except Dr. Willis who entertained the smallest hope of the restoration of the King's mind. Mr. Pitt continually declared this opinion to Lord Melville, and they had both determined to return to the bar, as the dissolution of the ministry was then on the point of taking place.

The letter in question Lord Melville took from Mr. Pitt, saying, he had a trick of losing papers, and furnished him only with a copy, the original remaining in his Lordship's possession. The King wrote the letter at a little table of the Queen's which stood in his apartment, without the knowledge of any person: and having finished, rang his bell, and gave it to his *valet-de-chambre*, directing it to be carried immediately to Mr. Pitt.

In a conversation which his Majesty afterwards had with Justice Hardinge, he greatly commended the conduct of the House of Commons in regard to the regency question, and said, his illness had in the end been a perfect bliss to him, as proving ‘how nobly the people would support him when he was in trouble.’

His Majesty’s malady had, however, been very distressing; for, in a letter addressed from Windsor by Admiral Payne to Mr. Sheridan on the Regency negotiation, we find, ‘the King has been worse these last two days than ever: this morning he made an effort to jump out of the window, and he is now very turbulent and incoherent.’

The following anecdotes will show the state of the King’s mind at this time, and they have been now made public on the authority of one of the pages who was then in attendance on his Majesty.

‘The King was driving the Queen in the Great Park at Windsor, when, on a sudden, he exclaimed, “*There he is!*” and giving the reins to his illustrious consort, descended from the phaeton. I was then on duty, and the horse on which I was mounted was young and restive; and, notwithstanding my utmost exertions, turned and ran towards the carriage. I was covered with confusion, but her Majesty, who saw my distress, most graciously condescended to relieve me by a well-timed remark on the restiveness of my horse.

‘His Majesty now approached a venerable oak that had enlivened the solitude of that quarter of the park upwards of a century and a half. At the distance of a few yards he uncovered, and advanced, bowing with the utmost respect; and then seizing one of the lower branches, he shook it with the most apparent cordiality and regard—just as a man shakes his friend by the hand.

‘The Queen turned pale with astonishment—the reins dropped from her hands. I felt the most painful apprehension lest the horses in the carriage, finding themselves under no control, should run headlong to destruction: nor did I dare to call for assistance, lest the attendants should witness a scene that I desired to keep from their view. At last, her Majesty became attentive to her situation; and as the reins

were happily within reach, they were recovered, and the Queen commanded me to dismount, and to go and intimate, in a soothing voice and suppliant terms, that her Majesty wished for his company.

On my approach, I perceived the King was engaged in earnest conversation. It was the King of Prussia with whom his Majesty enjoyed this rural interview. Continental politics were the subject.

‘I approached with reverence—“May it please your Majesty—”

“Don’t you see I am engaged?” said the King.

‘I bowed and withdrew. “His Majesty is engaged, and—”

“Go again,” said the Queen, interrupting me. I went. “May I presume to inform your Majesty that—”

“What is the matter?” said the King, in great surprise.

“Her Majesty is in the carriage, and I am commanded to intimate her desire of your Majesty’s company.”

“Good lack-a-day!” said the King, “that is true: run on and inform her Majesty that I am hastening to her.”

* * * * *

‘It was Sunday, and his Grace of Canterbury commanded prayers to be read in the royal apartment.

“Dearly beloved brethren—” said the chaplain.

“Tallee ho! Tallee ho!” said the King.

“The scripture moveth us in sundry places—”

“Go forward, Miranda! go forward! Tallee ho! Actæon! Tallee ho!”

“To the end that we may obtain—”

“Halloo! Ranger and Swift; Tallee ho! Tallee ho! ‘Ware Fox, Miranda! ‘Ware Fox!”

‘The chaplain looked at Sir George Baker, and Sir George looked at the chaplain; and then, *risum teneatis amici*,—they laughed.

‘And the King laughed—and we all laughed,—and Sir George Baker said that the prayers had done his Majesty a vast deal of good—and Dr. Willis said the same—and the King dined very comfortably, and was cheerful—and he told Dr. Willis and Sir George that he wished to see them dance a hornpipe.

“We beg leave to decline the honour of dancing in your Majesty’s presence.”

“*Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas,*” said the Sovereign. “Here is my sceptre,” said he, holding the knife in a threatening posture; “and the man who presumes to oppose my will shall be instantly—instantly impaled alive.”

‘And the King called for his flute, and Sir George Baker and Dr. Willis danced till it was dark; and thus ended the sabbath day.’

* * * * *

‘It was my fate to be on duty this morning in the King’s apartments.

‘The attendants had been enjoined the profoundest silence. No answer was to be given to any question proposed by his Majesty. I was unable to see the wisdom of this injunction. A discreet answer might have frequently soothed the patient, and conciliated attachment.

‘I am confident the prohibition was productive of great mischief; and in evidence of this proposition, I beg leave to relate a memorable occurrence.

‘Several symptoms of convalescence had made their appearance the preceding day; and with the benevolent view of refreshing the domestics, after long and severe attendance, they had leave of absence for three or four hours. Meanwhile, I was commanded to remain in the royal presence, and to act according to exigencies.

“****,” said the King, calling me by name, “it is a fine morning—has there been a hunt?”

‘I bowed.

“****,” said the King again, ‘has there been a hunt this morning?’

‘I bowed.’

‘His Majesty was obviously displeased; but I did not dare to transgress orders.

“Give me the lemonade,” said the King.

‘I gave it, and bowed.

“Take the glass,” he said.

‘ I approached to take it. In a moment he seized me by the collar, threw down the glass, and then attacked me with so much vigour and alacrity, that I was constrained to call for assistance.

‘ A physician was happily in the antichamber, and heard me. On seeing him enter the room, the King desisted, asking me, “ *Whether I had found my tongue?*” ’

* * * * *

A national thanksgiving for the recovery of the King was solemnized on April 23, at St. Paul’s Cathedral, at which their Majesties and the Royal family attended. At the conclusion of the service, the Prince of Wales hastened from the cathedral to Carlton-house, where he changed his dress for the uniform of his regiment: and, taking the command of it, proceeded to meet his Royal father on his return; thus becoming himself his guard and conductor to the Queen’s palace. Alighting there, his Royal Highness presented himself at the door, in a manner that required to be seen, in order to be appreciated. ‘ It was to the *revered monarch*—to the beloved parent—that his Royal Highness offered assistance. The tender attachment of the most affectionate of sons—the zealous devotion of the first of subjects—were manifested with an energy and a grace that no language can adequately describe. The event was otherwise commemorated by grand fêtes, illuminations, &c.; and the King’s birth-day was celebrated with unusual splendour, terminating with a ball, at which an incident occurred which was strongly characteristic of the Prince’s regard for ‘ the small sweet courtesies of life.’

The King, however, was not present during any part of the day, owing to the shock occasioned by the duel so recently fought between the Duke of York and Colonel Lenox. In the evening, a most splendid ball was given; and notwithstanding what had so recently happened, and the established etiquette that no person should stand up at country-dances who had not danced a minuet, Colonel Lenox appeared in the circle with Lady Catherine Barnard. This the Prince of Wales did not perceive until he and his partner, the Princess Royal, came to

the Colonel's place in the dance ; when, struck with the impropriety, he took the hand of the Princess, just as she was about to be turned by the Colonel, and led her to the bottom of the dance. The Duke of York and the Princess Augusta came next, and they turned the Colonel without notice or exception. The Duke of Clarence with the Princess Elizabeth came next, and his Royal Highness followed the example of the Prince of Wales. The dance proceeded, however, and Colonel Lenox and his partner danced down ; but when they came to the Prince and Princess, his Royal Highness led his sister to the chair by the side of the Queen. Her Majesty then, addressing herself to the Prince, said, ' You seem heated, Sir, and tired.' ' I am heated and tired, Madam,' said the Prince, ' not with the dance, but with dancing in such company.' ' Then, Sir,' said the Queen, ' it will be better for me to withdraw, and put an end to the ball.' ' It certainly will be so,' said the Prince, ' for I never will countenance insults given to my family, however they may be treated by others.' At the end of the dance her Majesty and the Princesses withdrew, and thus the ball concluded. The Prince, with his usual gallantry, afterwards explained to Lady Catherine Barnard the reason of his conduct, assuring her Ladyship that it gave him much pain to be under the necessity of subjecting a lady to a moment's embarrassment.

On the 6th of February, 1788, his Royal Highness was initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry, at the Star and Garter, Pall-mall. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, as Grand Master, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Manchester, and several other noblemen of that respectable order, attended at the ceremony.

About this time the first dividend of his Royal Highness' debts was declared to be nine per cent., which was very gladly received by the creditors, and tended to raise the Prince in the estimation of the people.

His Royal Highness now for a short time took up his residence at Richmond-house, the cause for which will be subsequently explained. On the 20th of April, 1778, the comedy of *The Way to Keep Him* was privately performed before his Royal Highness ; the characters being cast as follows :—

Lovemore	Lord DERBY.
Sir Brilliant Fashion . . .	Hon. Mr. EDGECUMBE.
Sir Bashful Constant . . .	Major ARABIN.
William	Sir HARRY ENGLEFIELD.
Sideboard	Mr. CAMPBELL.
Widow Belmour	Hon. Mrs. HOBART.
Mrs. Lovemore	Hon. Mrs. DAMER.
Lady Constant	Miss CAMPBELL.
Muslin	Mrs. BRUCE.

The prologue was written by the Right Honourable George Conway, and spoken by the Honourable Mrs. Hobart. Of this lady, who afterwards became the Countess of Berkshire, we shall have to speak hereafter, when, according to the fashion of the times, she presided at a faro-table which was frequented by the Prince of Wales; and where on some evenings she gave her dramatic readings, in which she was assisted by that sprightly and witty barrister, the present Mr. Jekyll.

The following additional lines were made to the prologue, in compliment to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cumberland, who very condescendingly noticed this mark of the attention of their visitors :—

And should those favour'd feats, this happy night,
Shine with a lustre eminently bright;
Should royal greatness humbly condescend
To lay the prince aside, and act the friend,
Indulgent to the liberal arts they love,
They'll strive to pardon faults they can't approve.
And could their flattering smiles with equal ease
As the ambition give the power to please,
We'd fill the mimic as the real part,
And pay in duty what we want in art.

Among the audience present were his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, Lord and Lady Stormont, *Mrs. Fitz-herbert*, the Duchess of Devonshire, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Sheridan, and, what was considered very wonderful, Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt came in together. The Duke of Richmond was sole attendant and master of the ceremonies on this occasion.

Among the events of this remarkable period, we cannot forbear mentioning, that the Prince of Wales, with his usual con-

sideration and beneficence, apprehending that the poor of the city of London might sustain some hardships and inconvenience from the delay of his Majesty's annual bounty, directed his treasurer to pay into the chamber of the city of London the sum of 1000*l.* for the relief of the poor of the same, and likewise directed 200*l.* to be transmitted to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh for the same purpose. A motion was made soon after in the Court of Common Council, and carried unanimously, for a vote of thanks to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, for his timely and munificent benefaction; but an amendment, moved by Mr. Deputy Birch, that thanks should also be given to his Majesty, for the frequent bounty which had been extended by him for the same humane purpose, and to congratulate the Prince on his treading in the steps of his father, was rejected. This amendment, which came from a well-known party man, and was evidently of a party complexion, gave rise to a warm debate, as being founded in an error of the grossest kind. It was observed, that the annual bounty of the King did not come from the private purse of the King, but from the civil list, and made a part of the annual grant of the nation for that establishment; whereas, the present magnificent bounty came from the purse of the Prince, and would not even prevent the common sum from being paid into the City Chamber, as soon as the government was happily settled. This being clearly explained by the Recorder, Alderman Wilkes, Alderman Skinner, and others, Mr. Deputy Birch at length consented to withdraw his motion.

At Christmas, 1789, his Royal Highness visited that bon vivant, the Earl of Sandwich, satirized by Churchill under the name of Jemmy Twitcher, at his seat at Hinchinbroke, where a numerous party annually assembled during the holidays. The mornings were devoted to concerts, at which his Royal Highness performed on the violoncello; Madame Mara, then in the zenith of her ability, came from Burleigh with the Earl of Exeter to join the party; an excellent band, led by Ashley, was engaged, and his lordship assisted as usual on the kettle-drums. Peter Pindar, speaking of his lordship's performance on that instrument, says—

He beats old Ashbridge on the kettle-drums.

An elegant theatre was fitted up for the evening amusements, when *Love-à-la-Mode*, *The Mock Doctor*, *Virgin Unmasked*, *High Life below Stairs*, &c., were performed by amateurs ; and an occasional prologue, written by his lordship in honour of his Royal Highness' visit, was spoken by L. Brown, Esq., M.P. for Huntingdonshire. After supper the evening concluded with catches and glees. His Royal Highness remained with the Earl one week, and on departing said, he had often heard of his lordship's hospitality, but could not have expected to have experienced so much gratification and pleasure in such a very numerous and diversified assemblage.

Soon after the recovery of the King, the Prince of Wales set off on an excursion to Yorkshire, and honoured the races at York with his presence. The day after his arrival, he was waited upon by the corporation, who presented the following address to his Royal Highness, with the freedom of their ancient city, in a most elegant gold box, which were very graciously received.

' May it please your Royal Highness,

' The Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of York, animated with the most lively gratitude for the high honour conferred on this ancient city by your presence, beg leave to approach your royal person with the utmost respect, and most cordial affection. This honour, Sir, is greatly increased by your Royal Highness' being the only heir-apparent to the imperial crown of this realm whom we have ever had the felicity personally to address.

' They cannot resist the present favourable opportunity of expressing their just admiration of, and unfeigned acknowledgments for the wisdom and moderation which so eminently distinguished the affectionate and princely conduct of your Royal Highness, in the most awful and trying situation, when all men looked up to your Royal Highness for protection, with the fullest assurance of receiving it ; and blessed as this kingdom hath been by divine providence, in the happy recovery of our most gracious Sovereign (for whom they entertain the warmest sentiments of duty and loyalty), it is their fervent prayer, that when it shall please the Almighty to call his Majesty to a heavenly throne, your Royal Highness may succeed

him in the hearts and affections of a free, brave, and loyal people, and long live to reign over them with the happiness and glory of a patriot king.

‘Your Royal Highness is respectfully entreated to permit your royal name to be enrolled among the freemen of this ancient city, and to accept the freedom thereof, which is thus humbly offered to your Royal Highness’ gracious reception.’

To this address his Royal Highness was pleased to return the following answer.

‘My Lord Mayor and Gentlemen,

‘I thank you for your loyal and affectionate address, and for the satisfaction you express at my visit to the city of York.

‘It gives me sincere pleasure that my conduct has been properly understood by you, and that my opinions, as to the powers necessary to have been trusted to me for the general welfare, have not been mistaken, by the respectable citizens of York, for an extravagant lust of power, or any unbecoming haste to assume the seat, which to be called to as late as possible is the constant and warmest wish of my heart. Impressed with these sentiments, I must, above all others, rejoice in that happy event, which is the subject of your joyful congratulations, and which touches my feelings not more as an affectionate son, than as the person most interested in everything which concerns the prosperity and happiness of the realm.

‘I with pleasure accept the freedom of your ancient city, and your offer of enrolling my name among its citizens.’

From York, the Prince of Wales proceeded to Wentworth House, the seat of Earl Fitzwilliam, the heir of the estate and virtues of the illustrious Marquess of Rockingham. At this hospitable mansion, a magnificent fête was prepared in honour of his Royal Highness. Nothing could be more superb and sumptuous, than the whole of the arrangements. In the true style of old English hospitality, which is nowhere to be found in greater perfection than in the county of York, nor exercised with more generous splendour by any nobleman than the worthy representative of the house of Wentworth, the gates of Wentworth Park, on being honoured with the presence

of the heir-apparent, were thrown open, to the love and loyalty of the surrounding country, and no fewer than twenty thousand persons partook of the liberality of the noble owner. The diversions (consisting of all the rural sports in use in that part of the country) lasted the whole day, and his lordship's park was the grand stage on which the numerous personages played their parts. The spectators were the Prince, with his attendants, and the nobility and gentry from every part of the country without distinction. The dinner was an assemblage of every delicacy that the world could produce; and the ball at night, consisting of more than two hundred ladies, the flower of Yorkshire, with their partners, was the most brilliant ever seen beyond the Humber.

In coming to town from Wentworth House, his Royal Highness encountered an alarming accident, but which was attended by no ill consequences. About two miles north of Newark, a cart crossing the road, struck the axle of the Prince's coach, and overturned it. It was on the verge of a slope, and the carriage fell a considerable way, turned over twice, and was shivered to pieces. There were in the coach with his Royal Highness, Lord Clermont, Colonel St. Ledger, and Colonel (Lord Viscount) Lake, recently deceased. Two of the Prince's servants were on the box. The Prince suffered a slight contusion in the shoulder, and his wrist was sprained. His Highness was undermost in the first fall, and by the next roll of the carriage was brought uppermost, when, with great presence of mind, he disengaged himself, and was the first to rescue and disengage his fellow-travellers. Lord Clermont was the most hurt. He was much wounded in the face, and was otherwise so severely bruised, that he was obliged to remain at Newark. The other gentlemen were, like the Prince, fortunate enough to escape with little injury. The accident happened at ten o'clock at night, and it was a clear moon-light. The carriage was his Royal Highness' own travelling coach, with hired horses and postilions; and the mischance was occasioned by the wilfulness of the postilions, who drove to clear the cart with their common precipitation. Colonel Lake's post-chaise being close behind, the Prince and Lord Clermont went for-

ward in it to Newark, where his Royal Highness slept, and proceeded to London the next morning.

In the early part of the year 1788, the Prince of Wales went to Plymouth, in company with his brother the Duke of York, to pay a visit to their brother, Prince William Henry, commander of the *Pegasus* frigate, who had lately arrived in that port. On their arrival at Plymouth, Prince William hastened to meet them, and it was represented by an eye-witness at the time as a most noble and gratifying sight, to behold the three royal brothers together, of whom every parent would have been proud, and to whom the nation looked up as the future guardians of its rights and liberties. On the morning after their arrival, their Royal Highnesses, accompanied by several naval and military officers, visited the dockyard, and surveyed every object of curiosity or interest. In the evening they dined with a select party, and at eleven o'clock proceeded to the Long-room Store-house, where there was an assemblage of the principal ladies and gentlemen of Plymouth and its environs. On their entering the room, the three brothers walked arm in arm, the Prince of Wales in the centre: they received the compliments of the whole company, and returned them with affability, dignity, and ease. Their Royal Highnesses danced with Miss Winne, Miss Calton, Mrs. Depeister, Miss Fanshawe, and Miss Arthur. Their Royal Highnesses retired about one o'clock.

On the following day their Royal Highnesses went afloat, and the whole fleet in Hamoaze immediately manned ship, and saluted with twenty-one guns each. After riding to Maker Heights, and taking a survey of Whitsand Bay, Penlie Point, and the Ram Head, they returned to dock, dined, and in the evening went to the Long-room. The next day, taking coach at the barrier gate, they drove through the town very slowly, and, being again saluted from the ramparts of the citadel with twenty-one guns, they set out on their return to London.

Few things in the life of George III. did more honour to his reign, than the devotion of his son, Prince William Henry, his present Majesty, to the service of the British navy; nor can anything be considered more honourable to an individual than that son's spirited acceptance of the professional life proposed

to him by his royal father. The naval character is one of the dearest to the interests of Britain. Every rank of life alike looks up to it for protection and security. Naval fame is, however, dearly earned. The sailor's warfare is in the farthest extreme of sufferance and danger. 'The very elements,' to use the words of an elegant writer, 'are his foes ; and he often receives more injury from them, than from those of his country. He has to contend not only with a faithless ocean, replete with danger, but with the change of climate, with the trying succession of burning suns and freezing skies. He is borne away from his friends and native land, confined to the ship in which he sails, and deprived of every communication that may cheer his heart in the moment of distress, and at the extremities of the globe. The hour of combat approaches him with redoubled danger ; and it not unfrequently proves his lamentable fate to fly from the quick approach of consuming fire, to find a tomb in the devouring wave. The first years of the infant seaman's life are fatigue and hardship. Removed from a parent's tender care, and all the comforts of a protecting home, it is his lot to enter upon a scene where the severe discipline of rigorous instruction prepares him to bear with resolution the future toils of his profession.'

It is pleasing to know, that the example of the King of England's son, thus devoting himself to a course of arduous service, in order to gain instruction in the duties of an important profession, was not without its influence in other countries. The Prince had not long been at sea, before the King of Prussia made use of the circumstance to illustrate, in a very striking manner, the excellent sentiments contained in the following answer to a nobleman who had applied for a commission to his son in the army.

'Most illustrious, dear, and faithful!

'I have seen your petition concerning your son. It is proper to inform you, that, some time since, I have given orders that no men of rank should be admitted into my armies, as these gentlemen, after a campaign or two, thinking themselves exceedingly clever, generally retire, settling on their own

estates, where they enjoy the reputation of having been in the service. If your son chooses to be a soldier, I can assure you that his title will avail him nothing in the way of preferment, unless he endeavours to acquire the knowledge requisite to his profession.'

P.S. (In the King's own hand.) 'As our young nobility in general never learn anything, they of course are exceedingly ignorant. *In England, one of the King's sons, wishing to instruct himself, has not scrupled to set out as a common sailor.*

'If any one of our men of fashion should chance to distinguish himself, and prove useful to his country, he will have no reason to plume himself upon his quality.

'Titles and birth are nothing else than vanity and folly. True merit is personal.

'FREDERIC.'

There was one peculiarity in the style of living which distinguished his Royal Highness at this time, which gave great offence to the King, although it was by no means regarded as so venial by some of the other branches of the royal family, and particularly so by his mother, who, having been brought up in Germany, assimilated her habits in a great degree with those of that country, although at the same time she identified herself as much as possible with the more staid and formal ones of the English people. The Duke of York had also just arrived from the native country of his mother, completely germanized, and immediately despised, as he was wont to call it, the monastic gloom of an English Sunday evening, by frequenting the evening concerts and conversaziones, which it was at this time the fashion to hold on a *Sunday evening*, the sabbath. These meetings at Carlton House were rich and inspiring to the devotees of mirth and harmony; but, in justice we must add, that had they been confined to music only, or to a display of harmless jollity, even perhaps the most rigid Calvinist would not have raised his voice against them, much less have visited them with the whole weight of his zealous fury; but they were the resort of the titled profligates of both

sexes, and some of the meetings were distinguished by Bacchanalian and Circean scenes, which would have merited castigation on any night, much more so on the sabbath. It must, however, be mentioned, that the King himself frequently indulged in music on a Sunday evening, until the Bishops interfered in the same laudable manner as they did with the short petticoats of the figurantes of the Opera House, although it were a curious question to decide whether they were the eye-witnesses of the abomination, or took their *measures* from the opinion of others; yet the King, actuated by the genuine spirit of piety, was no sooner informed that the practice of holding Sunday evening concerts was contrary to the due observance of the sabbath, and having, at the same time, received some information of the scenes that were passing on a Sunday evening in the house of the heir-apparent, than he immediately caused it to be known to the nobility and gentry of all the royal house, that it would be expected they should dispense with all Sunday evening concerts and entertainments of the kind, as everything of that nature would be discountenanced by his Majesty. As it may be supposed, the command was laughed at by all those who were not of the royal household, or who were not dependent on royalty for a pension; but at Carlton House and other places it became a standing joke, and with some of the party it was their regular custom to send to the Bishops, who might be resident in London, a polite invitation to a Sunday evening *conversazione*, as the most rational method of recreating themselves from the fatigues of the day. The Prince was considered at the head of this party, and, consequently, the whole weight of the indignation of his royal father fell upon him; but parental authority was rejected, clerical interference was laughed at, and although at court the evening concerts were suspended, yet in some of the most exalted coteries of the fashionable world, they were followed with an enthusiasm which appeared to exhibit the sabbath as a day of jollity and mirth, not of devotion and pious exercises.

The following anecdote shows the promptitude which his late Majesty always felt to embrace every idea that could promote the essential interests of the nation. It occurred in the year

1789, and is thus recorded by a writer of that period. Lord Rodney dining some months ago at Carlton House, congratulated the Prince of Wales on seeing a plate of British cured herrings at table. 'Your Royal Highness,' said the noble veteran, 'does infinite good to the British navy in encouraging this example of English luxury; every table will follow the fashion, and if the number of fashionable tables in the nation be considered, the result may be in time an addition of twenty thousand of the hardiest seamen to our navy—of seamen raised and employed in that branch of fishery which has raised Holland to her maritime force.' 'My lord,' replied the Prince, 'you do me more justice than I deserve; these herrings, I am sorry to say, were not cured by British hands. I understand your reasoning, it is just—it is that of Lord Rodney, upon his own element. Henceforward I shall order a plate of British cured herrings to be purchased at any expense, and appear a standing dish at this table—we shall call it a Rodney. Under that designation, what true patriot will not follow my example?' For a long time afterwards, a red herring was called a Rodney, but the origin of the name was not generally known.

SECTION III.

[From 1790 to 1800.]

It has been pointedly said by a celebrated French writer,

Le temps qui change tout, change aussi nos humeurs,
Chaque age a ses plaisirs, son esprit et ses mœurs ;

and if, in accordance with those sentiments, we were to draw a comparison of the close of the last century and the present period, we must confess that, in regard to the morality and purity of the female character, the preference is decidedly to be given to the latter. About the year 1790, the principal gambling-tables, or faro banks, were kept by titled ladies, who hesitated not to repair their shattered fortunes from the accruing profits ; and it may easily be conjectured that these nocturnal meetings, although avowedly held for the purpose of gambling, were often scènes of a far different description, frequented as they were by all the younger branches of nobility and men of fortune, who were certain of meeting there with the most dashing Cyprians of the age, and also with some who were training up to that character under the auspices of the patroness of the night. The lady who was most conspicuous at this time at the head of her faro table, was the celebrated Lady Archer, a woman steeped to the crown of her head in infamy and vice, and who, when she left this mortal stage, was unable to say ‘ I have performed one good or generous action.’

We would rather avert our view from the scenes which took place in the harem of this woman, but the illustrious subject of the present Memoir is deeply concerned in them ; and the writer of it has, in the entire ruin of a very near relative, reason to deprecate the hour when this woman’s eyes first opened on the world, and to regret that she was not swept from it as a pestilence in which no human happiness could live ; and yet, to the close of her life, this Hecate of iniquity shone conspicuously for her *piety* and *religion*. She was seen on the sabbath bending her way to the conventicle—a *living painted sepulchre*,

so bedaubed with cosmetics, and the wrinkled deformities of her nature so filled up with the impotent remedies of art, that the eye shrunk from the view as if it had presented to it one of nature's vilest abortions ; but

Not Archer's bible can secure her age,
Her three-score years are shuffling with her page ;
While Death stands by, but till the game is done,
To sweep that stake in justice long his own.

In all the arts and mysteries of love she was acknowledged to be the paragon of the day ; and one of the first who fell into the snares of this accomplished Circe was the late Duke of York. Re-ascending in the scale of the alphabet, in regard to the names of her admirers, we find her at last, under the protection of Mr. Errington, the cousin of Mrs. Fitzherbert ; and it was by this gentleman that the Prince of Wales was introduced to the faro-table of Lady Archer. At this period her ladyship was the mother of three lovely daughters, whom, from the laudable plea of not exposing them to the snares and temptations of the world, she kept in a state of almost monkish seclusion. But the real grounds for that mode of treatment was the loss of the income derivable from their fortunes, which was to be at the disposal of their mother until their marriage. Vigilant, however, as the mother was, and strictly as she supposed that she was guarding the Hesperian fruit, two of her daughters, whilst her ladyship was presiding at her faro-table, let young Love in at the window, and the mischievous urchin one night opening the door, they rushed into the arms of their lovers, and, by their subsequent marriage, Lady Archer lost the usufruct of their fortune. One, however, still remained—the loveliest of the three ; and Lady Archer, fearing that she might follow the example of her sisters, determined that she should be her companion during her nocturnal revels ; and thus was she introduced into a society in which female virtue was of no estimation, and in which it might with truth be said to have no existence at all. The Prince of Wales saw the beautiful daughter of Lady Archer, and for a time the charms of Mrs. Fitzherbert were neglected by him. But in this instance he had a very difficult and delicate part to act. Mr. Errington

was generally the attendant of the Prince to the Pandemonium of Lady Archer, and any attentions or assiduities which he might shew to her lovely daughter, might be taken notice of by that gentleman, and conveyed to a quarter where least of all he wished it to be known. Some little bickerings had already taken place there, in regard to a connexion which at this time was supposed to exist between his Royal Highness and the famous, and we may also add, the infamous Lady Jersey; but it was then only floating on the surface of popular report, although credited by those who moved in the particular sphere of his Royal Highness.

The Prince now looked round him for an auxiliary to assist him in the conquest of the youthful Archer, and he very judiciously selected an individual, who was in every respect calculated for the purpose, and this was no other than the Honourable Mrs. Hobart, to whom we have briefly alluded in a former page. The first step which this lady took was to give a grand masked fête at her superb villa in the vicinity of Fulham, to which Lady Archer and her daughter were to be invited, and where the Prince, assisted by the disguise of a masquerade, would be enabled to whisper the effusions of his *unalterable love* into the ears of the new conqueror of his affections, without the Argus eyes of jealousy being constantly upon him. On referring to the *European Magazine* for July, 1791, we find the following description of this memorable fête, which was attended with some very extraordinary circumstances to the Prince of Wales.

‘ June 28.—*Mrs. Hobart's Rural Breakfast and Promenade.*

‘ This long looked-for and long-prevented déjeuné was given yesterday, in spite of the weather. It is almost needless to remark, that all the first nobility and fashion about town graced this most delightful fête. The Prince of Wales came first, and precisely at one o'clock. About four or five hundred persons were present: amongst them was the Duke of Gloucester, Duchesses of Rutland and Gordon, Margrave of Anspach, *Mrs. Fitzherbert*, the Duke of Queensberry, several of the corps diplomatique, and many other foreigners of the very first distinction. The Duke of Clarence was expected

but did not attend. The breakfast lasted from two till past seven o'clock.

‘The leading person in this entertainment (which was obliged to be confined to the house on account of the weather) was Mrs. Bristow, a near relation of Mrs. Hobart. This lady, who had long resided at the Indian court of Lucknow, was every inch a queen. Dressed in all the magnificence of eastern grandeur, Mrs. Bristow represented the Queen of Nourjahad, as the Light of the World, in the Garden of Roses. She was seated in the large drawing-room, which was very beautifully fitted up with cushions in the Indian style, smoking her hookah, amidst all sorts of the choicest perfumes. Mrs. Bristow was very profuse with her otto of roses, drops of which were thrown about the ladies’ dresses. The whole house was scented with the most delicious fragrance.

‘The company, on entering, were all presented to Mrs. Bristow by Mrs. Hobart. Young Keppel, son of the Margravine of Anspach, was dressed in girl’s clothes. He was in the character of a Calabrian, and sang some charming French songs with the divine Le Texier, who was in woman’s clothes, as a ballad-singer, and played on the fiddle.

‘A lady was dressed as a Savoyard; she also sang, but could not be distinctly heard, on account of an intolerably large mask over her face. This lady was afterwards discovered to be Miss Archer, daughter of Lady Archer, and to whom the Prince of Wales, as a Bohemian nobleman, appeared to pay particular attention.

‘Each lady had a lottery-ticket given her by Mrs. Hobart on entering, and each drew a prize. The Duchess of Rutland drew the second highest; but the gross lot, or first prize, never went out of the wheel until the last lady that drew, and that lady was Miss Archer. It was remarked, that on her opening her prize, a deep blush came over her countenance, and she became so confused that Mrs. Hobart led her into an adjoining room, where they were soon afterwards joined by the Prince of Wales. The party did not break up until nearly nine o’clock.’

As it may be supposed, the cause of Miss Archer’s confusion excited considerable surprise, and all were anxious to discover it; but it did not transpire until some time afterwards, when

Mrs. Hobart mentioned it in confidence to a friend on whom she could rely—who mentioned it to another—and thus it soon became the theme of conversation in the immediate coteries where the parties were known.

The plan was entirely devised by Mrs. Hobart, with the knowledge and privity of the Prince, to declare the ardent affection which he entertained for Miss Archer, and the prize contained a beautiful locket set round with diamonds, in the centre of which was G. P., encircled with the motto '*L'amour est l'ange du monde.*' The present was accompanied by some amorous lines, taken from one of the ancient poets, which have been beautifully versified as follow:—

I wish I were the bowl,
The bowl that she kisses;
I would breathe away my soul
In the goblet of kisses.

I wish I were a flower,
Or the dove which sings
In the evening bower,
With sun-set on her wings.

For, if I were a flower,
I should sleep upon her breast;
And, if I were a dove,
I would sing her to her rest:

And lovely her slumbers,
And sweet her dreams should be,
And beautiful her waking,
If watched by me.

This meeting may be considered as the declaratory one of the Prince's passion for Miss Archer; and, perhaps, no female virtue ever withstood so nobly the incessant attacks of an assailant, hitherto deemed irresistible. There was, however, a power watching over the virtue of this intended victim, which ultimately saved her from the ruin that awaited her, and that power was a deep and rooted attachment for another, but whose circumstances in life were considered by her mother as not sufficiently affluent, nor could his connexions boast of any

titled descent or aristocratical honours. Flattered, however, as she might have been by the marked attention which the most accomplished Prince in Europe had paid her, still, with the holy fire of a secret love burning within her, she considered every return that she might make to his protestations as a direct profanation of the vows of fidelity and constancy which she had sworn to another; and consequently she met all his assiduities with the most marked coolness and indifference. To experience a repulse of this kind was a very uncommon circumstance in his career of gallantry, but rather than operating as a check, it appeared to act as a stimulus, and to goad him on to the final consummation of his wishes.

If, however, this amiable girl was able to withstand the blandishments by which she was surrounded, and to rise superior to all the stratagems which were employed to effect her downfall, there was one individual at the fête who was determined, *coute qui coute*, to chain the Prince to her car, and to be the temporary ascendant in his affections, to the complete discomfiture and mortification of her aspiring rivals. This lady was the Queen of Nourjahad, the Light of the World—the beautiful Mrs. Bristow. To account for the determined spirit with which this elegant female prosecuted her amour with the Prince of Wales, it may be said to have arisen in a great degree, from a revengeful disposition for some supposed or real affront which Mrs. Fitzherbert had offered to her, in refusing to acknowledge her in public on account of the questionable purity of her character. We hold in our remembrance the old adage of the Devil calling the kettle black,—and certainly for a lady like Mrs. Fitzherbert, whose marriage had been openly, publicly, and officially contradicted, and who, in consequence of that disavowal, was then living under the protection of the Prince of Wales, as his mistress; it certainly must have appeared rather farcical to see her mount herself upon the stilts of immaculacy of character, and to cast her look of scorn and contempt on all those who had not just the countenance of royalty to support them in their iniquity. To humble a rival of this kind was the pride and glory of Mrs. Bristow; and being in the possession of personal charms very little inferior, if any, to Mrs. Fitzherbert herself, it was a struggle of ascen-

dency between these celebrated beauties, in which each claimed the conquest, and each believed herself to have achieved it. It was also currently reported at this time that Mrs. Fitzherbert had been heard to say, that it was the rank of his Royal Highness that she loved more than his person; and as this report was found to be actually true, it was greedily taken advantage of by her artful rival, to exalt herself, and to debase Mrs. Fitzherbert, in the good opinion of his Royal Highness. It was aptly and jocosely said by Sheridan, that the Prince was too much every lady's man to be the man of any lady; and this was a trait in his character of which Mrs. Fitzherbert was by no means ignorant. The disparity of their ages stood in the way of any permanent attachment: personal esteem and regard for each other's virtues formed no part of their connexion: it was on one hand the enjoyment of the sensualist; and on the other, the gratification of female vanity, and the love of personal aggrandizement. The monopoly of his affections was a task which no woman who had the slightest insight into his character would ever attempt to accomplish; and therefore Mrs. Fitzherbert looked upon the temporary ascendancy of Mrs. Bristow with the eye of comparative indifference, being conscious to herself that any attempt at restraint on her part would only lead to a greater estrangement; and as the world believed her to possess the ascendancy in his affections, she was satisfied with the shadow, although she could not always command the substance.

On the morning subsequent to the fête given by Mrs. Bristow, as the Prince was sitting at breakfast in company with Sheridan and Hanger, a small package was delivered to him, which, on opening, he found to contain the locket which on the previous night he had presented to Miss Archer, but with no other notification than a few words written in the envelope, '*La vertu est la félicité de la vie.*'

In regard to the following conversation, which took place on this occasion, we must be excused for giving it verbatim as it appears in the MS. before us, which was found amongst the papers of the late Lord Coleraine, headed, *A Prince's Opinions of Female Virtue*. If opinions were always the criterion of, or a clue to the development of human character, we

should consider ourselves liable to censure if we suppressed a tittle of any conversation in which a man exhibits himself in his real, unsophisticated colours, by an unreserved disclosure of his sentiments; but with the knowledge which we possess of the real opinions which the Prince entertained of the existence and the strength of female virtue, we are certain that any estimate which an individual might be tempted to draw of the Prince's real character, from the sentiments expressed on this occasion, would be one of error and misconception.

'Sheridan,' said the Prince, laying the package on the table, 'what is your opinion of the strength of female virtue?'

'It is the brightest pearl in the diadem of a woman,' answered Sheridan; 'and when supported by modesty, truth, and religion, it is a rock in the ocean, against which all the waves may dash in vain: but, on the other hand, when once an impression has been made upon it, under the influence of passion, it is like the frost-work of an autumnal morning, which is dissolved with the first ardent beam that falls upon it.'

'Do you think,' asked the Prince, 'that there is any female virtue that cannot be overcome?'

'Sheridan,' said Hanger, 'let his Royal Highness answer his own question. I know no one more able. An individual who has travelled a road five hundred times, and stopped at every house that presented itself, must be able to give a correct account of them.'

'But suppose,' said the Prince, 'that that individual was refused admission to some of them; would it be fair to pass an opinion of the character of their inmates, according to that which you may have formed of those into whose houses you may have been admitted?'

'It would be illiberal in the extreme,' said Hanger.

'Then, by the same parity of reasoning,' said the Prince, 'it would be illiberal in me to pass a general opinion of the strength of female virtue from my own single experience.'

'There is a great deal of sophistry in that remark,' said Sheridan; 'for, is not the most valuable part of our knowledge founded on experience? and therefore, let the subject be what it may, that man must be the wisest who has had the greatest experience in it; and who will dispute the experience of your

Royal Highness in every thing relative to the character of woman?’

‘But in which I am still a fool,’ said the Prince; ‘and of that fact Archer’s daughter has just now convinced me. She has given me a lesson to read which I never studied before. But, to repeat my question—do you believe that there is any female virtue existing which cannot be overcome—I mean, supposing that it has been subjected to every temptation and every ordeal which the most fertile ingenuity can devise?’

‘Most undoubtedly,’ replied Sheridan; ‘and I should be very sorry to hold a contrary opinion. I believe in the existence of a pure, unsullied female virtue, with the same religious certainty as I do, according to the dictates of my moral sense, in the existence of right and wrong.’

‘I dispute not the existence of it, nor ever did,’ said the Prince; ‘its very destruction presupposes that it did once exist; for that can never be destroyed which had no previous reality—but it is the fact of its invincibility that I wish to have established.’

‘Then look to Lucretia, your Royal Highness,’ said Sheridan.

‘A solitary instance,’ said the Prince, ‘which history has treasured up, to show us a phenomenon; but let me state a case to you—supposing a woman were to present herself before you, gifted with all the beauty which invests the female with such irresistible power, and you found that the possession of that beauty was not to be obtained by the ordinary means of seduction, what would then be your opinion, and how would you act?’

‘I would let her alone,’ said Sheridan, ‘and hold her as a sacred thing.’

‘And declare it to the world,’ said the Prince, ‘that her virtue was invincible.’

‘Certainly,’ said Sheridan, ‘as far as the means that have been employed to overcome it.’

‘That virtue is still but negative, in my opinion,’ said the Prince, ‘for a fortunate expedient might still effect its conquest.’

‘Before, however,’ said Sheridan, ‘I pronounce a virtue as incorruptible, invincible, I am supposed to believe that *every* expedient has been tried, even the scarcely resistible expedient of a deeply-rooted, passionate attachment; for if a girl falls not to *that*, I would fearlessly expose her to every other temptation which the utmost ingenuity of man could devise. I consider the contemplation of a woman, strong, firm, unconquerable in her virtue, to be one of this world’s finest spectacles.’

‘What is the mere contemplation?’ said the Prince; ‘I can look at the stars, and admire them in their glory; but how I am benefited by that contemplation? there is no sensual gratification in it.’

‘Certainly not,’ said Sheridan; ‘but there is a pleasing sensation conveyed to the mind by the contemplation of any beautiful or sublime object.’

‘Apropos,’ said the Prince, ‘speaking of the contemplation of a beautiful object, I have been very much struck with a singular remark of Dr. Darwin’s, wherein he says, that the delight which the eye of man experiences in the contemplation of a female bosom, arises from the association that it is the source from which we drew our first sustenance.’

‘Indeed,’ said Sheridan, with a smile; ‘then why do we not feel the same delight at the contemplation of a *wooden spoon* *?’

‘Excellent!’ exclaimed the Prince, ‘excellent—in future I shall never see a beautiful bosom but I shall think of Sheridan’s wooden spoon—nevertheless, you must allow that contemplation is one thing, enjoyment another, and to which would you give the preference?’

‘To each,’ said Sheridan, ‘in their own individuality; but they are as distinct in their natures as they are different in the effects that are produced. The contemplation of a beautiful woman, abstractedly speaking, depends entirely in its degree of delight upon the innate power which we possess of actually determining what beauty is—the mere question of enjoyment

* This inimitable reply of Sheridan’s has been erroneously claimed by another individual, who, it is well known, delights to strut about, decked out with plumes borrowed from others; but it is only in the master mind of a Sheridan that such a happy idea could have been engendered.

may be decided by a Caliban, to whom sense is everything—mind nothing. There is, however, another point to be taken into consideration, which is, that there is *one* sense which nature has implanted in the heart of every female, and on the facility or difficulty of the suppression or suspension of that sense, the great question may be determined of the strength or weakness of her virtue.'

'And what is that sense,' asked the Prince?

* * * * *

'Now,' said his Royal Highness, 'yesterday I was at Hobart's *fête*, and there, I will not say exactly by assignation, I saw that lovely girl, the daughter of that —— Lady Archer.'

'Ripe as a cherry,' exclaimed Hanger, 'and luscious as a peach.'

'By the dexterous management of Hobart,' continued the Prince, 'I contrived to convey a present into her hands, which I intended to be the forerunner of our future intimacy. I conversed with her afterwards—I found her reserved and coy, —but *c'est souvent la façon des jeunes filles de jouer le rôle d'une niaise, et de se porter s'ils ne savaient pas la différence entre un homme à deux jambes, et un bête à quatre*. The girl, however, is not to be caught in the usual way; for there, in that package, lies the present which I gave her. Now, what is your opinion of that girl? is her virtue to be conquered, or not?'

'My opinion is,' said Sheridan, 'that she is not destined for your Royal Highness; and rather than I would take one more step to undermine a virtue of that kind, I would hold myself satisfied *with what I have already got*, and leave her the pure and unsullied gem which I found her.'

'A *rara avis!* a *rara avis!*' exclaimed the Prince; 'a Sheridan preaching morality. But now, in the plenitude of your merciful and forbearing spirit, will you tell me that this virtue is so strongly entrenched, that no art, no stratagem, can make a breach in it?'

'That is an opinion which I have never expressed,' said Sheridan. 'In the general intercourse of the world, we can only judge of particulars from universals—we proceed from

unities to numbers ; and although by that method we sometimes arrive at an erroneous estimate, yet in the present case it will hold good. That girl, I say, will never be yours.'

'By G—d! but she shall,' said the Prince ; and rising from the table, he placed the rejected present in his *escrutoire*. The conversation afterwards turned upon the enormous sums which were depending on the races at Newmarket, where the Prince's horse, *Escape*, was backed to win every race in which he was to start.

On the evening of this day, his Royal Highness repaired to the faro-table of Mrs. Hobart. The company were unusually numerous, and it was evident that extraordinary exertions had been employed to augment the amusements of the night. One apartment was appropriated for music, in which the instrumental and vocal performers of the Opera-House executed some of the most favourite compositions of the day ; the room adjoining was fitted up in the Turkish style, with its ottomans and its other voluptuous accessories ; and it only required the *slippers at the door*, to declare the real purpose for which this apartment was intended. Into this room the *Honourable* Mrs. Hobart conducted his Royal Highness, having previously whispered to him that she had something of great importance to communicate to him. Sherbet was handed to his Royal Highness in a golden goblet—he threw himself on an ottoman—Hobart, in all the richness of her voluptuousness, seated herself by his side. 'The point is gained,' she said, 'Archer is yours, if you will pay the price.'

'Impossible !' exclaimed the Prince ; 'I cannot believe it—you must have been misinformed—for it is only this morning that I received back the present which you so dexterously conveyed into her hands.'

'That is a trifling circumstance,' said Hobart : 'the sudden effect, perhaps, of a qualm of conscience—a matter of false delicacy. A girl, unless she be a consummate simpleton, generally suspects to what a present leads, or, more correctly speaking, to what it is intended that it *shall* lead ; and I have known many girls who have refused a *silver* toy, and have afterwards accepted of a golden one. Perhaps your present

was not rich enough. But the truth is, I have arranged the business with the mother—the price, I must confess, is rather high.’

‘With her mother, did you say,’ exclaimed the Prince, ‘with Lady Archer herself? Oh, it is not possible! why, I should suppose that she was the last person on earth with whom you would have conferred on a subject of that nature. To consult with a mother on the ruin of her daughter, and to arrange a stipulated price for it—such an act is scarcely heard of in history—it is too preposterous—too unnatural for me to entertain the thought for a moment. Hobart, it cannot be—’

‘But it is true,’ said Mrs. Hobart, ‘and the terms are 500*l.* a-year for the life of the mother, and a settlement of 1000*l.* a-year upon the daughter.’

‘And upon the fulfilment of these terms,’ said the Prince, ‘Lady Archer consents to sacrifice her child?’

‘It has been so stipulated,’ said Mrs. Hobart.

‘Then,’ said the Prince, rising with indignation, ‘I renounce the business altogether. Whatever may be my libertine propensities, never shall posterity have to record of me, that I could stoop to the infamy of bartering with a mother for the ruin of her daughter. I know not by what terms to stigmatize this conduct of Lady Archer, nor do I consider that there is a word in the English language forcible enough to express my abhorrence of her character. If by any arts, stratagems, or promises, the ruin of a girl be accomplished, let the consequences fall on the head of her seducer; but to mingle the infamy with it of having purchased her innocence of her own mother, is an act that I would not have resting on my conscience to be put in possession of all the beauties of a seraglio. Tell Lady Archer that the Prince of Wales in future declines her further acquaintance.’

There never was a state of society so degenerate that it did not include a great proportion of good, and consequently of goodness; there never was an individual so thoroughly a reprobate as not to possess some redeeming virtues: and it is also generally the case, that the strength of those virtues is in the ratio of the turpitude of the vices. Be it, therefore, a part of our task, the best and dearest part, to shew the bright picture

by the side of the dark one. We will endeavour to place before our readers 'the counterfeit presentment' of those two cousin-germans at least, if not brothers, Wisdom and Folly; we will bid them look on *this* picture and on *this*. We will ask them to see what a grace is seated on *this* brow, and will enable them to contrast it with the cap and bells that jingle on the forehead of the other; we will, in short, strive to place before them 'Hyperion' and 'the Satyr' side by side, and then, if they *will* quit the one to dwell with the other—if they will

On this fair mountain leave to feed,
To batten on this moor,

they must—but it shall not be for want of seeing the qualities of each, and the differences and distinctions that subsist between them.

The issue of this affair of Lady Archer was the very opposite to what was expected either by that lady herself or Mrs. Hobart. To find a sense of feeling or of honour in the Prince of Wales, when the possession of a beautiful girl was the question, appeared in their eyes as little short of a miracle—a complete metamorphosis of the man must have suddenly taken place, or he would not, from a mere qualm of conscience, have thrown away so rich a prize, especially as some cases of seduction on the part of his Royal Highness had come to the knowledge of those ladies, in which a complete obtuseness of feeling was displayed in regard to the measures which were adopted to accomplish the end in view. But it was not the untoward issue of this business as far as regarded the daughter of Lady Archer that excited the regret of the interested parties, but it was the resolution of the Prince to withdraw himself altogether from the faro-tables of both Lady Archer and Mrs. Hobart, and this was a loss of no trifling consideration, for independently of the sums which he lost nightly, his presence gave a rank and character to their parties, which rendered them the most attractive assemblies of the day.

Numerous and ingenious were the attempts that were made to bring the deserter back, and all of them had a reference to the gratification of his paramount passions. If some exquisite beauty had burst suddenly upon the world, she was only

to be seen at Mrs. Hobart's or Lady Archer's; but for a time the Prince withstood all the allurements, until the celebrated Lucy Howard—that masterpiece of God's creation, who—

was sent on earth

To shew to man what angels are in heaven,
was brought by Mrs. Hobart from her father's mansion in Yorkshire, to captivate the affections of the heir-apparent, and to bring him again within the circle of her influence. The game was deeply and skilfully played, and the royal stakes were won. Lucy Howard was to be contended for, and she was a prize for which many a sovereign would have given the brightest diadem in his crown.

Lucy Howard was, as might naturally be expected, on her first visit to London, a perfect novice in the world. Her father was first cousin to Mrs. Hobart, in possession of but a very moderate income, with a large and expensive family to support. She had two sisters, almost equal to herself in beauty, one of whom married a gentleman of considerable fortune, and for a length of time was the leader of the fashionable world, the presiding goddess of Portman-square. She now resides in Grosvenor-place, Pimlico, an expressive memento of the transitory duration of personal beauty. Of the other sister, we shall have more to relate, when she appeared at court as the wife of a Nottinghamshire gentleman, the admiration of every beholder—the ruling toast of the debauchee—the identical female, of whom the late amorous Duke of Queensberry declared, that ‘to inhale her breath would restore him to juvenility,’ and who became the avowed object of the attachment of the Prince of Wales, he being himself ignorant at the time, that she was actually the sister of his once adored Lucy Howard.

We will not transcribe the scenes which led to the fall of this earthly angel, but the visitants of Brighton may recollect a comfortable mansion, which stands about three miles from the town, at the foot of a wood, on the right hand of the road leading from London, and to this place was Lucy Howard conveyed, the secret love of the Prince of Wales. It has been mentioned as rather a remarkable circumstance, that no issue was ever known to emanate from any of the amours of either the Prince of Wales, or the late Duke of York : we have it, however, in our

power to contradict that statement, as far as concerns the former illustrious personage, for in this retreat at Brighton, Lucy Howard became the mother of a child, which, however, lived but to its second year, and was buried in Brighton churchyard, under the name of George Howard.

This amour of his Royal Highness brings immediately under our notice, a female whom we deprecate whenever we mention her, and who may be considered in the human race, as the type of the serpent—beautiful, bright, and glossy in its exterior—in its interior, poisonous and pestiferous : we allude to Lady Jersey, the coadjutor of Dr. Randolph in the abstraction of the letters of the Princess of Wales, the vile and dastardly instrument of a faction, to heap obloquy on the head of a female, not half so guilty nor so criminal as themselves.

It may be easily supposed that the visits of the Prince of Wales to his beloved Howard were not paid in the open face of day, but to avoid suspicion, he was generally accompanied by Lord Rawdon. It was his usual custom to leave the Pavilion at twilight, when no official or state business required his presence, and, leaving the town by the Lewes road, ride over the Downs to the arms of his expecting beauty. There was, however, one person, who witnessed these mysterious motions of the Prince, and who, fancying herself to be then paramount in his affections, could not brook the idea of a secret rival, and with all the art and cunning inherent in her character, she determined to trace the mystery to its source. For this purpose she enlisted in her cause one of the stable boys, who could not withstand the temptation of a few guineas, and he consented to become a spy upon the actions of his Royal master, and to follow him in private, whenever he left the Pavilion on his nocturnal adventures. The first report of this fellow to his employer was, that he had traced the Prince to a particular house, but of the motives of his visit, or of the character of the inmates of it, he was utterly ignorant. Here were materials furnished sufficient to set the heart of a jealous woman in a blaze. It was indispensably necessary that the exact relations of the inhabitants of the house should be ascertained ; for Lady Jersey was too well acquainted with the character of the Prince of Wales, not to suspect that he was

attracted thither by some hidden beauty, who might eventually supersede her in the station which she supposed that she held in the affections of his Royal Highness, and thereby overthrow at once all the plans which she had formed for her future aggrandizement. The issue of this affair was of a deeply tragical nature, and we have cursorily alluded to it in a former part of this work (see pages 29, 30).

The youthful emissary of Lady Jersey, without the aid of experience or of caution to guide him through such a labyrinth, went fearlessly to work. In an ill-fated hour he was entrapped in the vicinity of the premises by the Prince himself. An instantaneous explanation was demanded—the boy hesitated—the Prince became exasperated—he beheld himself the object of the curiosity of a vulgar mercenary hireling—and, hurried along by the impetuosity of his feelings, he inflicted that summary chastisement upon the boy, which rendered him a cripple for the remainder of his life; and which, but for the aid of the highest professional skill, would have proved his death*.

This affair caused an extraordinary sensation in the country, and rendered the Prince highly unpopular; and such was the excitement which it occasioned, that the house in which Lucy Howard resided was literally so besieged by spectators during the day, that she eventually found it necessary to evacuate it, and took up her residence in the vicinity of Richmond. Thither the Prince followed her, and there is a tree now standing in Richmond Park, with the initials G. P. and L. H. cut on it, as a memorial of the happy hours which they spent under its shade.

Lucy Howard afterwards became the wife of Mr. Smith, a gentleman of independent property in Yorkshire, and was the mother of a numerous family, and died respected by all who knew her.

Whilst these proceedings were carrying on, a storm was gathering in another quarter, which threatened to bring his

* We are fully aware that in our version of this affair we differ from the general report, which goes so far as to state that the death of the boy ensued from the injury which he received. We rejoice in the opportunity which is thus afforded us of rescuing the memory of his late Majesty from so grievous an imputation as that of having been the cause of the death of a fellow creature, for the boy lived above a dozen years afterwards with his parents at Horsham, the Prince allowing them 50*l.* per annum for his support.

Royal Highness into immediate contact with the members of his own family, and particularly with one of his royal parents.

The extreme partiality which the Queen always manifested for the Prince of Wales, in preference to any other of her children, was a subject of general notoriety. It was not the profligate course of life which he pursued—it was not his wanderings into every path which could lead to scenes of dissipation and libertinism—it was not his open and avowed opposition to the counsels of his royal father, which could effect any diminution in her affection for him; but what the combined force of all these circumstances could not achieve was nearly brought to pass by a supposed insult offered to her dignity, by the public appearance of Mrs. Fitzherbert in those quarters where Royalty sometimes condescended to appear. The countenance which was openly given to that celebrated lady by families of the highest distinction, and who were the regular attendants at court, had been long a subject of secret annoyance to some of the female branches of the royal family, but more particularly so to the Queen herself, who saw, or thought she saw, in the open and public acknowledgment of Mrs. Fitzherbert, the groundwork of the contamination of her court, by her being obliged to receive at it those individuals who were known to be the constant associates of the mistress of the Prince of Wales, and of some other ladies whose virtue stood on very questionable grounds. To shut the doors of the drawing-rooms against such females as the Duchesses of Devonshire and Gordon would have been an act which could not have failed to have involved her in the most serious differences with those noble families; and yet, according to the principle of *noscitur a sociis*, those ladies were the constant companions of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and to whom she appeared almost as a divinity at whose shrine they bent their knee, as the chosen object of their adoration. On viewing the matter, therefore, in this light, neither the Duchess of Gordon nor of Devonshire, nor any other of those noble ladies who were the associates of Mrs. Fitzherbert, were proper persons to be received at the pure and immaculate court of St. James'.

To enter into a full detail of the various intrigues which were now set on foot, to break off all connexion between the Prince

of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert, would be to exhibit a system of the most unwearied machination, unparalleled in the private history of individuals. Offers of the most princely kind were made to her to leave the country, but finding all these rejected, recourse was had to threats, which involved her personal existence. She was menaced with the whole power of the government to prove her guilty of high treason—she was threatened with prosecutions on account of her pecuniary difficulties, and these threats were actually put in force, the effects of which, however, ultimately recoiled on the promoters of them; for to whom else could Mrs. Fitzherbert apply in her pecuniary difficulties than to the Prince of Wales? and whatever the sacrifice might be, which he was called upon to make on these occasions, the money was always procured, and thereby helped to swell the amount of his debts, which the nation was called upon in a short time afterwards to pay. Connected with these heavy drains on the finances of his Royal Highness, we are enabled to state the following fact, on the authority of the individual who was the principal agent in the business:—

The person of Mrs. Fitzherbert was one morning taken in execution for a debt of 1825*l.*, the *Prince of Wales being in the house at the time*. The writ being returnable on the morrow, and no bail being available, the money must be paid, or the lady conveyed to prison. The Prince lost not a moment in making the application to his customary resources, but they appeared to be, most unaccountably, hermetically closed against him. In some instances the most shallow excuses were returned; in others, the impossibility of supplying so large a sum on so short a notice; all of which the Prince knew to be false, and, therefore, he began justly to suspect that there was some secret machinery at work to prevent the necessary supplies from being advanced. In this emergency Mr. C——l was despatched to an eminent pawnbroker in Fleet-street*, who at that time was in the habit of lending

* We are indebted to the same authority for the following humorous anecdote of this pawnbroker, in some of his pecuniary transactions with Sheridan. That celebrated man had, at one time, disposed of all his personal property, with the exception of a horse, which had been presented to him by the Prince of Wales,

large sums of money to the nobility on their plate and jewels, and who was the actual holder of the celebrated jewels of the Duchess of Devonshire, the publicity of which hurried her prematurely to her grave. On the present occasion Mr. Parker, the pawnbroker, lost no time in repairing to Park-lane, where the unfortunate lady was in the custody of the sheriff's officers, and here a new difficulty presented itself in the way of her emancipation. The harpies of the law objected to any part of the plate or jewels being deposited in the hands of Mr. Parker until their demand was satisfied. On the other hand, the wily pawnbroker refused to advance the money until the property was placed in his hands, as he did not know but there might be other actions in reserve, for the liquidation of which the property in the house might turn out to be inadequate. Under these circumstances C—I was secretly despatched to Carlton House, with instructions to bring away with him a particular casket, which contained the Prince's state jewels, which, although exceeding in value ten times the amount of the sum which he had to pay, was borne away by the pawnbroker to his depository in Fleet-street, but which, however, was redeemed on the following day, by an advance which the Prince obtained from the wealthy Jew in St. Mary Axe.

To return to the original subject. The object which chiefly engrossed the attention of the public at this time was the trial of Warren Hastings, and on one occasion the Queen, with

and in the exigency of the moment he applied to the pawnbroker to advance him 50*l*. on the horse, he agreeing to pay for the keep until the animal was redeemed. It was a species of pledge that had never been offered to the pawnbroker before, and he at first refused to receive it, but on Sheridan undertaking to redeem it within a month, the 50*l*. was advanced. Month after month, however, elapsed, and the horse was not redeemed, the pawnbroker receiving, as usual, from Sheridan his promises that in a few days the horse should be taken off his hands. Sheridan, however, had made no stipulation that the pawnbroker should make any use of his horse, but he was frequently seen riding it about town, and especially to and from his country-house at Clapham. This intelligence was conveyed to Sheridan, and on the following week, when he went to redeem his horse, the charges for principal, keep, interest, &c., amounted to 80*l*. 'Aye, but,' said Sheridan, 'I have got a set-off against you; you were to *keep* my horse, not to *ride* it; but I'll let you off cheaply, there is your 50*l*., the sum advanced, and I will only charge you 30*l*. for your pleasant rides, and now we are quits, Parker.' The pawnbroker looked confounded; he knew the law was on the side of Sheridan, and seeing himself completely outwitted, he quietly gave up possession of the animal, determining never to take any horse again as a pledge—at least, not from Sheridan.

the Princesses Elizabeth, Augusta, and Mary, made their appearance in the Duke of Newcastle's box. Her Majesty was attended by the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Holderness, and Lord Aylesbury; and as she came without state, the usual etiquette was dispensed with, allowing those ladies, and the young daughters of Lady Lincoln, to sit on the same seat with her. The royal box in Westminster Hall was on the right hand of the chancellor; on the left was the box for the Princes, and the one contiguous to it was appropriated to the nobility. On the entrance of the Queen into the royal box, that which was set apart for the nobility was nearly empty, but on a sudden a personage appeared in it, towards whom every eye was soon directed, and this personage was no other than Mrs. Fitzherbert. The look of indignation which the Queen cast upon her, is represented to have been as deep and severe as it was possible for the human countenance to assume, and after addressing a few words to Lady Holderness, she rose with all the pride of offended majesty, and retired from the box. This extraordinary conduct on the part of the Queen excited the utmost astonishment, for the proceedings of the day had not yet commenced, and, therefore, some very powerful cause must have operated upon her to induce her to take so sudden a departure from a scene which she was come expressly to witness, without even waiting for the commencement of it. The most contradictory rumours were immediately afloat, but, strange to say, not one of them ever approached the truth; and the prevalent one was, that the King had been suddenly taken ill, and required the attendance of the Queen. In a short time, however, the Prince of Wales entered the box appropriated for the princes of the blood, and immediately entered into conversation with Mrs. Fitzherbert. By the apparently forcible manner in which that lady expressed herself, it was evident that something had incurred her high displeasure; and her frequent allusion by signs to the royal box, betrayed that the cause of her displeasure arose from that quarter. The Prince in a short time retired, but Mrs. Fitzherbert remained until the close of the ceremony.

The Prince immediately returned to Carlton House, where he had scarcely arrived before the following note was

delivered to him. It was dated Buckingham House, February 13, 1790.

‘The Queen takes the earliest opportunity of expressing to the Prince of Wales her high sense of displeasure, at the very marked affront which has been offered to her, by the very unseasonable intrusion of a certain lady at the trial of Warren Hastings. It is the opinion of the Queen, that that lady should have been prevented from exhibiting herself in the royal presence, under the peculiar circumstances in which she is placed in regard to his Royal Highness. The sentiments which the Queen is so well known to entertain on that subject should have had their proper influence on the mind of the Prince of Wales, not still further to wound the feelings of his royal mother, by exposing her to the personal society of an individual, for whom she cannot entertain the slightest respect or esteem.

‘The very ambiguous and mysterious relation in which the Prince of Wales stands in regard to the lady in question, will always have its becoming weight in the mind of the Queen, to prevent her acknowledging her, *or any of her associates*, at the court over which she presides.’

The Prince no sooner read this extraordinary epistle, than in a sudden ebullition of passion he tore it into pieces, and threw them on the ground. He then immediately despatched a messenger for Sheridan, who was found at Brookes’, slowly recovering from the debauchery of the preceding night, and in no very fit state to appear before his royal patron. He, however, immediately obeyed the summons, and on his entering the private apartment of his Royal Highness, he found him pacing the room to and fro in the highest state of exasperation. The Prince had succeeded in collecting the fragments of the letter, and it lay in a legible form on the table. ‘There, Sheridan,’ said the Prince, as the former entered the room, ‘read that letter, and tell me what answer I am to send.’

Sheridan perused the letter—‘There’s the devil’s cloven foot in this,’ said he, ‘but we’ll pose her Majesty. She speaks of *a certain lady*, but whom are you to understand that she means by such an ambiguous phrase? It may be Moll Flanders or Bet Bounce. Call upon her Majesty, first to explain herself as to the identical lady whom she means, and, I think, it may be the means of stifling the business alto-

gether, for her Majesty will pause before she commits the name to writing. Besides, it would be a very impolitic act in your Royal Highness to pretend to know to whom her Majesty alludes, as it would be a tacit acknowledgment that you do actually stand in a particular relation with the lady in question.'

The Prince saw something very plausible and dexterous in this advice of Sheridan, and the latter indited the following answer, which was transmitted forthwith to Buckingham House.

'The Prince of Wales loses not a moment in acknowledging the receipt of a letter from the Queen, in which she expresses herself in very strong terms, on a supposed affront offered to her Majesty, by the appearance of *a certain lady* at the trial of Warren Hastings. As the Prince is not acquainted with any lady over whom he possesses such an undisputed right of control, as to fix a personal restraint upon her actions, much less to be made accountable for them, his Royal Highness respectfully submits to the Queen, the necessity of her Majesty being more explicit in regard to the individual who has given the offence, in order that the Prince may have some decided grounds to determine how far he ought to be called upon to enter into any further explanation on the subject of her Majesty's letter.

' *Carlton House, Feb. 13, 1791.*

In the course of the evening of the same day, the following note was left at Carlton House.

'I am commanded by her Majesty the Queen, to acknowledge the receipt of a note from his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in answer to a note written by her Majesty, complaining of the insult which was this morning offered to her in Westminster Hall. As the answer of his Royal Highness is considered by the Queen as wholly evasive, her Majesty, consistently with her dignity, is under the painful necessity of declining to see the Prince of Wales, until an assurance has been given that the insult shall not be repeated.

(Signed) *AYLESBURY.*

'*To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, &c.*

Carlton House.

This note was conveyed to his Royal Highness at Brookes',

who after having perused it, handed it over to Sheridan, and they retired into one of the private rooms, to consult on the next step that was to be taken; for the note of Lord Aylesbury was nothing less than a formal dismissal of his Royal Highness from the court of his mother; and he now perceived the delicate situation in which he stood, and still more, the difficulties which he had to overcome before tranquillity could be restored.

Mr. Fox being at that time in the house, the Prince proposed sending for him, that he might assist him with his advice, and on the whole affair being explained to him, he saw the absolute necessity of the Prince maintaining a high and commanding ground, and not to recede a single point, however severe and coercive might be the measures taken against him. Mr. Fox highly approved of the answer which had been recommended and written by Mr. Sheridan, and it was ultimately agreed by these two friends of his Royal Highness, that the following note should be transmitted to Lord Aylesbury.

‘My Lord,

‘I am commanded by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, to acknowledge the receipt of your note, written by the command of her Majesty, and to express his extreme regret, that as the affair between her Majesty and his Royal Highness is entirely of a private nature, she should have thought it necessary to have recourse to the intercession of a third person, to whom his Royal Highness is a perfect stranger, and with whom, consequently, he cannot enter into any confidential correspondence.

‘I am further commanded to say, that his Royal Highness is disposed to pay the utmost deference to any communication coming directly from her Majesty.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your obedient Servant,

CHARLES JAMES FOX.

‘To the Right Hon. Lord Aylesbury,
Buckingham House.

‘Brookes’ Hotel, Feb. 14, 1791.’

No immediate reply was given to this note, and the following day the Prince set off for Brighton, but in a few days after-

wards we find him again at Carlton House ; and although we have reason to suppose that the correspondence did not terminate with the note of Mr. Fox to Lord Aylesbury, and that the subsequent letters are in the possession of a person now residing at Brighton, yet certain motives, and very prudential ones, have operated on the mind of that individual, not to give them publicity, as their contents could not fail to be extremely painful to the feelings of the very lady on whose account they originated. So far, however, we are enabled to state, that a personal interview was effected between her Majesty and the Prince of Wales, through the medium of Lord Thurlow ; and as the same affectionate intercourse was resumed between them, by which their conduct towards each other had been hitherto distinguished, it was considered that an explanation had been given by the Prince sufficiently satisfactory to appease the wounded feelings of his royal mother.

The general style of living by the Prince of Wales was at this period in every respect most costly. His elegance of manners, his superb person, his exquisite taste in dress, as well as in the fitting up of his palace, his equipages and entertainments, were the theme of general praise and the objects of imitation. It must, however, be admitted that, in the decorations of Carlton Palace, and the Pavilion at Brighton, there was a more studied attention paid to what was gaudy and flimsy, than to that which might be deemed classically elegant. In regard to the latter edifice, which has been the subject of so much ridicule, it is undeniable that a thoughtless expenditure of money was bestowed upon it, which the general appearance of the building renders almost incredible. It is principally built of wood, but it may be stigmatized as a non-descript monster in architecture, and appears like a mad-house, or a house run mad, as it has neither beginning, middle, nor end ; and yet, to acquire this harlequin design, a miserable bricklayer was despatched to Italy, to gather something equal to the required magnificence, and actually charged two thousand guineas for his expenses. The room in which the Prince usually dined may be compared to a kind of oven. It is supported by four pillars in scagliola ; and when the fire is lighted,

the room is so hot, that the inmates are nearly baked and incrustated. This circumstance gave rise to the severe reply of Sheridan to Hanger, who, dining one day in the royal oven, the former said to the latter—‘How do you feel yourself, Hanger?’

‘Hot, hot, hot as h—l,’ replied Hanger.

‘It is quite right,’ said Sheridan, ‘that we should be prepared in this world for that which we know will be our lot in another.’

The ground on which the Pavilion is built is a kind of copyhold, held under the town of Brighton, for which the Prince agreed to pay 50*l.* per annum; ‘just sufficient,’ says a satirical writer, Anthony Pasquin, ‘to furnish the members of the corporation with grog and tobacco.’

About this period, the passion of the Prince for the turf appears to have been carried to an extraordinary excess, and he had been long not only an honorary, but an active member of the Jockey Club. Two of the most distinguished members of the club at this time were the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Fox; and as the circumstance which we are now about to enter upon operated more to the injury of the character of the Prince of Wales, as a man of honour, than any other event of his life, we shall hold ourselves justified in giving every particular concerning it.

To enumerate the different tricks which horse-jockies are thought to be in the habit of employing, in order to give them an undue advantage over their adversaries, would be to write a dissertation on cheats, some of them so curious and extraordinary, that without a thorough and previous acquaintance with the mysteries of the turf, it would be impossible to comprehend them. Few characters of eminence have distinguished themselves on the turf who have not been suspected, at one time or other, of these unjustifiable artifices; and hence the graver part of the world have been disposed to view these sporting meetings with any thing else than sentiments of approbation. What they could not but concede was innocent in itself, nay, even laudable, an exhibition of generous steeds contending for the palm of fleetness, they affirmed had degenerated from its original intention, and had become nothing more than a plau-

sible vocation for drawing two sets of men (such as are always to be found in opulent communities) together, namely, the dupes and the sharpers. These severe moralists divided the patrons of the turf into only two descriptions of men—fools who have money to lose, and knaves who devise plans to rob them of it. We need not point out in which of these two classes the Prince of Wales was placed; but it happened that, in the opinion of many, the circumstance of his horse *Escape* gave him the title of being ranked in both of them; and it is to rescue his character from that imputation, that we have resolved to give the most extended publicity to every circumstance connected with that singular event of his life.

It must indeed be confessed, that the amateurs of the turf have themselves given good cause for the outcry which has been raised against them. Where vast sums of money are at stake, it is by no means wonderful that suspicion should succeed disappointment in the breasts of the losers. So much are we under the influence of self-partiality, on almost all the occasions of life, that it is not in the least surprising, that a man who bets on his own judgment, if he loses, should be rather inclined to suspect foul play on the part of his antagonist, than admit that his own judgment deceived him. To this we must impute the many disputes that arise among gentlemen sportsmen, and the many recriminations with which they charge each other.

Sportsmen form a community of themselves, like the frequenters of the stock exchange, and are governed by a code of laws, different from those in usage among ordinary men. Their contracts are contracts of honour: very few of them are cognizable in our courts of justice, because it has been the policy of the legislature to discountenance every sort of gaming speculation, and to prevent gambling questions from being agitated in our courts of law, and thereby deriving encouragement from the rigid administration of justice, which so eminently distinguishes the public tribunals of the kingdom.

Under these disadvantages, it became necessary for the gentlemen of the turf to institute a court of their own, which observing some of the formalities of the ordinary courts, (as the solemnity of an oath in the examination of witnesses,) should

decide upon the disputes that might arise amongst them, and their decisions in matters of this kind were to be regarded as final. Of this nature was the Jockey Club. The decisions of this body were confidently appealed to, by all who thought themselves aggrieved by any sporting transactions, and the fiats of the club were regarded as standard authority, by all who were engaged in any pursuits within the sphere of its cognizance.

But perfection is not the nature of any human institution, and, therefore, that the Jockey Club should sometimes err in its decisions, cannot excite any surprise. In the autumn of 1791, the Prince of Wales came under the cognizance of this tribunal, and its decision proved so disagreeable to him, that he immediately retired from the turf. The circumstances attending this transaction, which produced so extraordinary a sensation in the sporting world at the period when it happened, were nearly as follows:—

On the 20th of October, 1791, the Prince of Wales' horse, *Escape*, then reckoned the best horse upon the turf, was beaten at Newmarket by two horses of inferior reputation. The odds, which, previously to this race, had run high in favour of *Escape*, now changed against him, and it was the general opinion of the sporting world that he would lose the match he had to run the next day. Accordingly bets were made to a large amount, and with great odds, that *Escape* would lose; but contrary to the opinion, and much to the disappointment of the knowing ones, *Escape* won his race.

The jockey who rode *Escape* on these two memorable days, published a pamphlet* a short time before his death, in which he very satisfactorily accounted for *Escape's* losing his first, and winning his second race. The mystery was nothing more than this: that on the first day's race *Escape*, for the want of proper exercise, was not in a fit condition to run; and that the exercise of the first day's race had opened his pores, and

* 'Genius Genuine, by Samuel Chifney, of Newmarket. Containing a full Account of the Prince's horse *Escape* running at Newmarket, on the 20th and 21st days of October, 1791.' This curious production made a considerable noise in the sporting world, and though only the size of an ordinary pamphlet, containing one hundred and thirty pages, sold at the enormous price of two pounds.

enabled him to perform better on the second day; but this was far from appearing satisfactory to the gentlemen of the turf, and as soon as the race was concluded, a rumour was propagated that *Escape* had run unfairly on the first day's race. It was reported that his Royal Highness got the grooms out of the way, and had given the horse a pail of water just before he had to run, and of course the horse was winded, and easily beaten. Chifney's own account of these particulars is so very curious, that we should do wrong to withhold it from our readers.

‘As I came from scale,’ says Chifney, ‘I was told that Mr. W. Lake (brother to Lord Viscount Lake, and the gentleman who had the management of the Prince of Wales’ running horses) had been saying something improper to his Royal Highness concerning *Escape*’s winning; I made it therefore my business to go immediately to his Royal Highness, who was riding with a gentleman near to the Great Stand House, and he immediately accosted me in the following words:—“Sam Chifney, as soon as *Escape*’s race was over, Mr. Lake came up to me, and said, ‘I give your Royal Highness joy; but I am sorry the horse has won, I would sooner have given a hundred guineas.’ I told Mr. Lake that I did not understand him, that he must explain himself.” I then answered his Royal Highness, saying—“Yes, your Royal Highness, it is very necessary he should explain himself.” This is all that passed on the subject to-day.’

Chifney's further account of this remarkable affair is as follows:—‘On the 22d of October, 1791, in the morning after *Escape* had won, his Royal Highness sent for me into his dressing-room, and then ordered me to be shewn into an adjoining room, where he thus accosted me:—“Sam Chifney, I have sent for you on some very unpleasant business. I am told, Sam Chifney, that you won six or seven hundred pounds upon the race on the day before yesterday, when you rode *Escape*, and was beaten upon him.”’

‘I replied, that I believed his Royal Highness had not such an opinion of me.’

‘His Royal Highness continued:—“I am told, Sam Chifney, that you won six or seven hundred pounds upon the race

yesterday, when you rode *Escape*, and won upon him: and I am told that Vauxhall Clark (clerk of the stables to the Prince of Wales) won all the money for you." I answered, "May I not offend by asking who it was that dared to tell your Royal Highness so?"

'His Royal Highness replied, "Sam Chifney, I wish to know whether you have any objection to take your affidavit, naming all the bets you had upon the race, every way, when you rode *Escape*, and was beaten upon him on the day before yesterday." I acknowledged my readiness to do it, if it would give his Royal Highness any satisfaction. His Royal Highness said, "*Sam Chifney, your doing it will give yourself satisfaction, it will give the public satisfaction, it will give me satisfaction.* You will specify in your affidavit all the bets you had upon both day's races, when that you rode *Escape* on the day before yesterday, and was beaten upon him; and yesterday when that you rode *Escape*, and won upon him, naming all the bets you had upon both those races, and to take your affidavit as such. I hope, Sam Chifney, you do not misunderstand me." I answered that I did perfectly understand, and that I would take care to do as his Royal Highness had ordered me.

'His Royal Highness said, "Sam Chifney, I wish to know if you have any objection against being examined by the Jockey Club, and in any way that they are pleased to think proper." To which I most fully and freely consented.

'His Royal Highness said, "I am told, Sam Chifney, that you were arrested at Ascot Heath for 300*l.*, and that Vauxhall Clark paid the money for you." I replied that this was the first word I had ever heard upon the subject. His Royal Highness said, "Sam Chifney, I wish to know if you have any objection to make an affidavit that you were not arrested at Ascot Heath, and that Vauxhall Clark did not pay 300*l.* for you?" I replied to His Royal Highness, "I am very willing to do it."

After relating some inconsequential particulars, Chifney proceeds to state, that 'On the same morning (22nd of October, 1791) his Royal Highness called me across the betting ring. I instantly obeyed his commands, and his Royal Highness put

me between himself and Sir Charles Bunbury, and then rode out upon the heath. After his Royal Highness and Sir Charles had talked upon the subject, his Royal Highness said, "Sam Chifney, I think you told me that you were willing to be examined by the stewards of the Jockey Club in any way they should please to think proper." I said, "Your Royal Highness, *I am proud to meet any man upon the subject.*" His Royal Highness then addressed himself to Sir Charles Bunbury. "There, Sir Charles, you hear him say that he is proud to meet any man upon the subject. Now, Sir Charles, I beg of you to take every pains you possibly can, so as to make yourselves perfectly satisfied; and then enclose me Sam Chifney's affidavits, and apprise me how the business ends, as I am going to Brighton to-night." His Royal Highness left Sir Charles, and rode near the betting-ring, where, after he stood a little while, he said, "Sam Chifney, *this business should be explained.*" I answered, "Your Royal Highness, *I don't how to explain it.*" His Royal Highness then rode off the turf to town, before the day's sport was finished, and I immediately went home. Soon after this, I received from Mr. Weatherby, clerk to the Jockey Club, copies of affidavits which I swore before the Rev. Dr. Frampton; naming that I had no bet upon the race, when I rode *Escape* on the 20th of October, 1791, and that I had twenty guineas, and no more, betted upon *Escape* on the following day, when I rode him on the 21st of October, 1791; and that I had the same desire of winning upon *Escape* when I rode him on the 20th of October, 1791, as I had when I rode him on the following day, the 21st of October, 1791; and further, that I had never been arrested on Ascot Heath, and that Mr. Vauxhall Clark never did pay any money for me. When I had sworn these affidavits, they were signed by the Rev. Dr. Frampton, and I immediately returned them to Mr. Weatherby.

'I was then had up before the stewards of the Jockey Club, who were Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart., Ralph Dutton, Esq., and Thomas Panton, Esq.

'Sir Charles Bunbury asked me some few questions:—What bets I had upon the first day's race, when I rode *Escape* on the 20th of October, 1791; and what bets I had upon the race

when I rode *Escape* on the following day, when he won, and who made my bets for me? I answered, that I had no bets upon the first day's race; that I betted twenty guineas upon *Escape* the next day, and no more: and that Vauxhall Clark betted for me.

‘Sir Charles Bunbury then proceeded to ask me what was my motive for waiting with *Escape* on the first day.

‘I told Sir Charles Bunbury that he was a wrong judge of his man.

‘Sir Charles Bunbury now stopped, and looked about apparently dissatisfied.

‘Mr. Dutton said, I think Chifney spoke very fairly.

‘Mr. Panton immediately said, *yes, very fairly*.

‘Sir Charles Bunbury did not ask me any more questions.

‘I then said to Sir Charles and the two other gentlemen, that my motive for waiting with *Escape* was, because I knew he could run very fast; I likewise knew *Sky Lark* could run fast, though a jade, for I had ridden against him most of the races he had run.

‘I was now dismissed, and this is every thing that passed with me from and to the Prince of Wales, Mr. W. Lake, and the Jockey Club, on this subject at Newmarket.

‘It may appear to some persons that I was too dry and harsh in my answer to Sir Charles Bunbury: the two other stewards, however, acknowledged it to be fair. I at this time had made the affidavit, and had answered every particular that was necessary for the Jockey Club; and this question of Sir Charles', to know my motives for waiting, went into private trials and abilities. But it was a personal reason which caused me thus to answer Sir Charles. I had been told by a nobleman, that a baronet, and a member of the Jockey Club, I believe Sir Charles Bunbury, had severely reprobated my conduct, on being beaten on *Escape*.'

After some reflections, which would only be found interesting to those who are concerned in the management of running-horses, Chifney concludes his narrative in the following words: —‘Some weeks after this, and I well remember that it was after the Duke of York's coming from abroad with the Duchess, Sir John Lade wrote to me at Newmarket, for me to attend on

the Prince immediately. I went to Carlton-house directly, and the Prince of Wales told me, that Sir Charles Bunbury came to him and told him, that if he suffered Chifney to ride his horses, that no gentleman would start against him. His Royal Highness said, he told Sir Charles Bunbury that if he or any other person could make it appear that Sam Chifney had done wrong, then he would never speak to him again; and without that he would not sacrifice him to any person. His Royal Highness then said he should leave the turf, as he could not be guilty of that ingratitude to let his horses go over for the forfeits, after being told that no gentleman would start against him, but that he should pay the forfeits, and leave the turf. His Royal Highness then said, he could see the meaning of it. —“They think you, Sam Chifney, a good rider, and they think you have won a race or two for me that you had no business to have won; and that there are others who wish to have you, and others who think you too good for me, as they know you will not see me robbed.” His Royal Highness then told me, he should always be glad to see me, and for my own sake to let him see me often; and that if he ever kept horses again, that I should train and manage them. After this, I was ordered to attend on his Royal Highness at Sir John Lade’s, in Piccadilly, which I did; and in the presence of Sir John Lade and Mr. Philips, his Royal Highness put his hand upon his bosom, and said, that he believed Sam Chifney had been to him very honest, and wished me to understand, that the two hundred guineas a year he gave me, was for his life, saying, “I cannot give it for your life, I can only give it for my own life.” I bowed to his Royal Highness, and said I was well satisfied.’

In 1802, Chifney relates, that at the Brighton and Lewes race time, as the Prince of Wales was walking on the Steyne, having hold of a gentleman’s arm, he approached and told his Royal Highness that they cried out very much for him at Newmarket. His Royal Highness said, ‘Sam Chifney, there has never been a proper apology made; and they used me and you very ill; they are bad people; I’ll not set my foot on the ground any more.’

To show the corrupt appetite of the vulgar for detraction,

it was currently reported, that personal threats, and even personal demonstrations, had passed from the Duke of ——— towards his Royal Highness on the race course. This, however, could not have been the case, for the Duke continued in friendship with the Prince to the last. The singularity, however, of the case is, that Sir Charles Bunbury, who decided against the Prince, and ejected him from the Jockey Club, as well as the Duke, who shook, or is said to have shaken, his horsewhip at him on the race ground, retained his friendship to the last hours of their respective lives.

Such was the termination of the Prince of Wales' connection with Newmarket. His Royal Highness, upon this occasion, seems to have acted with a very proper degree of spirit and firmness, and it would not be easy to produce any reason to justify the Jockey Club for declaring, that if his Royal Highness did not discharge Chifney from his service, no gentleman would allow his horses to run against him. There was something so very imperious in this requisition, that it was impossible that his Royal Highness should comply with it; and it is not a little extraordinary that the Prince of Wales had no bets on the first day's race, and that on the second day's race his bets on *Escape* did not exceed four hundred guineas. Was this a sum that the Prince of Wales could possibly be guilty of any unfair manœuvre to win? Was this a sum that any but a mere common swindler of the turf would have hazarded his reputation to gain, by fraud and deception? Could it for a moment be thought, that for so paltry a sum as four hundred guineas, the Prince of Wales would commit an action not only unworthy of his rank, but which any gentleman would be ashamed of doing? Had the sum depending upon the event of the race been many thousand pounds, there might have been some temptation to foul play, though the fraud would still have been as dishonourable. But, in the present instance, the Prince of Wales had no adequate motive for doing a thing so mean, and so unworthy of elevated rank and unsullied character.

It may be asked, why did not the Prince of Wales declare upon his honour that no foul play had been used with respect to *Escape's* first race? Such a declaration would at once have

solved all difficulties, and put an end to all embarrassments. But was it proper for the Prince of Wales to have condescended to such a submission? Are there not sometimes suspicions of so disgraceful a nature afloat, and at the same time so improbable withal, that if the person, who is the object of them, condescends to reply to them, he degrades himself? Was it to be expected of the Prince of Wales that he should purge himself, by oath, like his domestic? Or was it to be looked for, that the first subject in the realm, the personage whose simple word should have commanded deference, respect, and belief, was to submit himself to the examination of the Jockey Club, and answer such questions as they might have thought proper to have proposed to him? That his Royal Highness could have satisfactorily answered all such questions, we are firmly persuaded; but at the same time we are fully of opinion that it would have been in the highest degree incompatible with the dignity of the Prince to have submitted to any such interrogatories. He did every thing that could, with due delicacy and respect to his rank and character, be required of him. He permitted his servant to be examined before the stewards of the Jockey Club, and even urged them to take every possible pains to come at a thorough investigation of the matter. What more could he have done?

We have been thus particular in our relation of this affair, because we are aware it excited a very strong sensation in the sporting world at the period when it occurred, and because we know that sentiments unfavourable to his Royal Highness, in regard to this transaction, prevailed long after the Prince had withdrawn from the turf. Had our opinion in relation to his Royal Highness' conduct on this occasion been unfavourable, we should not have hesitated to avow it; but, after the most minute examination of all the particulars that have come to our knowledge, we do not hesitate to express our sincere conviction that, in the whole of these transactions, the Prince acted a most manly, upright, and honourable part. We have shown, in the first instance, that his Royal Highness had no adequate motive for any foul play on either of the days that *Escape* ran his matches. On the first he had no bets depend-

ing; and on the second day, the stake he had depending was far too inconsiderable to have produced any bias on his Royal Highness' mind, so as to have led him to the commission of a dishonourable action. Men do not commit dishonourable actions without some adequate motive; and that we should believe the Prince of Wales was privy to, or conniving at, or commanding the dishonesty of his servant, is far too monstrous a proposition for us to accede to. To this we may add, that Chifney, without whose co-operation the scheme must have been defective, or at least very liable to detection, puts the most solemn negative on the imputation. It must have been by Chifney's management that *Escape*, if capable of winning, lost the first race, and occasioned the great alteration in the betting odds that occurred previously to the second race. But this management Chifney denies in the most solemn terms, and we have an opportunity of knowing that he persisted in this statement to the last moment of his life. Interest, a natural desire to stand well in the opinion of his contemporaries, together with many other considerations, might have induced Chifney, whilst in the vigour of his health, to persist in this statement, and even to substantiate it by the sanctity of an oath; but when he was on the verge of the grave, and when he could have no possible motive for persisting in a falsehood, his voluntary and repeated asseverations that his first declaration was correct, furnish a strong corroborating evidence to induce us to give credit to his statement. We know also that Chifney died in a state of comparative indigence and want. Was this likely to have happened, had he been in possession of so important a secret, as the knowledge of any thing dishonourable in the conduct of the Prince, respecting his turf engagements? Would he not have availed himself of such a circumstance to have relieved himself from his embarrassment? or, had he failed in that attempt, would he not have given vent to his disappointment by disclosing the secret?

Viewing, therefore, the subject in every possible light, we cannot see the slightest ground for suspecting the Prince of Wales of any thing dishonourable in his sporting engagements; on the contrary, he appears to us to have acted with the

utmost fairness and candour; and in withdrawing from the turf, to have done nothing more than what the unmerited and unbecoming treatment he received called for.

Were it possible at one glance to take a survey of the whole panorama of a human life, and to trace it through all its meanderings, with its bright and gloomy scenes, how much we should be struck with the erroneous opinion which we may have formed of the probable consequences of any particular event, at the time of its occurrence, and how often we may have been induced to regard that as a calamity, which actually in its consequences turned out to be a blessing to us! We will not go so far as to say, according to the Godwinian philosophy, that if Alexander had not bathed in the Cydnus, Shakspeare would not have written his tragedies; but we will affirm that there is not an individual who, on taking a retrospective view of his past life, is not able to trace his present circumstances to some very remote by-gone cause, which at the time was scarcely noticed, or supposed to possess any decided influence on his future destiny. This principle may be strongly exemplified in the case of the Prince of Wales, who little thought that the apparently trivial circumstance of one of his race-horses losing its race was actually the cause of his salvation from a plot which was then laid by a certain lord—now a marquess—and some of his associates, to plunge him into an abyss of positive ruin by their gambling transactions. We will mention only one which happened at this time, and which will fully expose the character of some of the Prince's associates, into whose society he was thrown solely by his attachment to the turf.

One night at Newmarket he was induced to play at hazard with certain individuals whose rank and station precluded the idea of any established or concerted system of fraud; but it must not be concealed, that on the head of one of these individuals (though now the possessor of immense wealth, and nearly of the highest rank of nobility) lies the weight of the ruin of more families than can be laid to the charge of any other professed gambler in the kingdom. On the night in question, Fortune appeared to frown on the Prince with her utmost severity; and on rising from the table, he found himself the loser of nearly 4000*l*. Some suspicion immediately arose

in his mind, that there must be some fraud at the bottom ; and taking the dice from the table, he put them into his waistcoat pocket, declaring that if the dice were found to be true, the money should be paid on the following morning. Consternation immediately seized the whole of the party ; they knew the dice were plugged, and the discovery of the fraud would be attended with the most serious consequences. A consultation was held, and it was determined that the only method of averting the disclosure of their villainy was the abstraction of the false dice, and the substitution of good ones. But how was this difficult task to be accomplished ? The Prince was at this time a visiter of the Duke of Bedford, whose house was the resort of all the sporting characters at Newmarket, and at which some of the sharpers who had concocted the deep-laid plan against his Royal Highness were on terms of the greatest intimacy. It was therefore proposed that lots should be drawn, and that the individual who drew the lowest number should repair immediately to the Duke of Bedford's, and by some stratagem obtain possession of the dice. Fortunately for the gang, the lot fell on a Mr. Russell, who, being himself a distant relation of the Bedford family, was less liable to suspicion as to his motive for repairing to the house of the Duke, and who, besides, being well known to all the domestics, no demur would be raised to his admittance. It was, however, found impracticable to accomplish the scheme without the aid of the domestic who was in close attendance on the Prince ; and, influenced by the bribe of 100*l.*, this domestic undertook to obtain possession of the waistcoat of his Royal Highness, when he was undressing for the night, and, after abstracting the false dice, to substitute the genuine ones. The stratagem fully succeeded ; Mr. Russell returned in triumph to his chap-fallen associates ; on the following morning, the Prince had the dice examined, and finding them to be good, he paid the amount of his loss without any further murmuring.

This business, however, did not rest here. The parties no sooner saw their innocence established, than they began to vent their indignation, openly and secretly, upon his Royal Highness ; accusing him of having cast an imputation on their characters which they did not deserve ; and declaring that it

was his rank only which protected him from the infliction of the most summary punishment. Reports discreditable to the character of his Royal Highness were now circulated in every quarter; the popular opinion rose against him; and the circumstance of his horse, *Escape*, which happened immediately afterwards, furnished fresh materials for the vindictive spirit of his enemies; the result of all was that his name was erased from the list of the members of the Jockey Club, and his horses declared incapable of running in his own name in future.

Under these painful circumstances, the Prince always maintained a dignified attitude. He met the storm which gathered around him without fear or despondency, although at the same time he could not but regret his forced retirement from the turf, as it deprived him of one of his most favourite amusements, and estranged him in a certain degree from the society of particular individuals whom he respected and esteemed: but on the other hand, had there been one step which a wise and disinterested counsellor would have advised him to adopt—had there been one which a sincere friend would have considered it his duty to urge him to, that one would have been his retirement from the turf. It was a hot-bed in which his most dangerous passions were nurtured—it was a sphere in which he sank from the dignity of a prince to become the companion and the dupe of the unprincipled sharper. To him it appeared a calamity—it was, in fact, a blessing to him: he saw in the loss of the first race by his horse an actual misfortune; whereas it might be characterized as an act of Providence, in its being the forerunner and cause of an alteration in his mode of life—by which his character was to be retrieved—by which he was to be rescued from the fangs of a set of harpies, who were fattening on the noble and unsuspecting nature of his disposition; and, like the vulture on the body of Prometheus, gradually lacerating the vitals of his moral existence. By the sincere friends and well-wishers of his Royal Highness, this event was hailed with no common satisfaction. The hopes of the nation revived—that as he was in some degree estranged from the unprincipled abettors of his extravagant propensities, and had relinquished a pursuit fraught with ultimate ruin to his

character and to his finances, he would assume a more steady and irreproachable mode of life, and regain the good opinion of that people over whom he was destined to govern. How far these sanguine expectations were realized, the sequel will sufficiently indicate. To expect a sudden transition from a life of habitual enjoyment and profligacy to one of domestic habits or personal restraint, could never have been imagined by any one in the least conversant with the human character; nor did it follow by any means, that although his Royal Highness had been forced to withdraw himself from one pursuit, that was attended with an enormous expense to him, yet that there were not others of a still more ruinous nature to which he was addicted, and which he still followed with all the reckless enthusiasm of the individual, who although he sees before him the abyss in which his terrestrial happiness is to be destroyed, thoughtlessly rushes into it, never to be afterwards restored to the station which he once held in the ranks of society.

Towards the latter part of the year 1792, the whole stud of his Royal Highness, amounting in all to twenty-eight head, was disposed of, and produced, what we should at the present day consider the rather inadequate sum of about five thousand guineas.

This sacrifice, although in every respect it did him honour, was, no doubt, a painful one to his feelings. Its bitterness was not a little enhanced by the peculiar circumstances of the case, as well as the particular good fortune that had attended his stud during the previous year. In 1791 we find him the winner of no less than thirty-one races, including seven king's plates; and it has been very pointedly asked, how it was possible that his Royal Highness, who in the year 1791 won almost every race for which his horses started, could, on his retirement from the turf, have been so considerable a loser, and involved in such distressing embarrassments * ?

* In order that a correct opinion may be formed of the success of his Royal Highness, during the year 1791, we subjoin the following:—

Mademoiselle by Diomed, 660gs. at Newmarket.

Devi Sing by Eclipse, 150gs. and 50l. at Lewes.

Don Quixote by Eclipse, 100gs. and 50l. at Newmarket.

Pegasus by Eclipse, the King's Plate at Newmarket, and 140gs. at Stockbridge.

Serpent by Eclipse, 80gs., at Brighton 60gs., and the Ladies' Plate at Lewes.

Amelia

Disgusted with the treatment that he had received, mortified with the stern and unbending disposition of his illustrious father, who still refused to admit him into his presence—distracted with the incessant clamours of his creditors, the Prince determined to seclude himself for a time, and took up his residence at the Grange, in Hampshire.

It is not on record that at any time of his life his late Majesty was fond of shooting: to the nobler sport of hunting, however, he was much attached; and, though never what is called a forward rider, was considered a very excellent and distinguished judge. During his residence in Hampshire—the happiest period perhaps of his life—he had as fine a pack of fox-hounds in his kennel, and, of course, as splendid a lot of hunters in his stable as could be met with in the country. The first of these came from Goodwood, where they had long formed the much-admired kennel of the grandfather of the present Duke of Richmond; and amongst the latter were not a few thorough-bred ones, who had distinguished themselves on the turf, yet were notwithstanding equal to the weight—by no means an inconsiderable one—of his Royal Highness. Amongst others, Curricule, Asparagus, Totteridge, and Torbay, may be mentioned as at this time composing part of his hunting stud; and it is not often now-a-days, we fear, that such magnificent specimens of blood and power are to be met with.

The Prince, though by no means a bruising rider, was, on all hands, acknowledged to be a most elegant and accomplished horseman; and as no less than six packs of fox-hounds (besides his own) were within easy reach of his house, he spent much of his time at this period in the enjoyment of that sport so truly worthy the protection and patronage of royalty. His

Amelia by Highflyer, the Third Class of the Filly Stakes, 1000gs., and 300gs. at Newmarket, and the Prince's Stakes at Ascot.

Escape by Highflyer, 250gs., 1000gs., the 140gs., and 55gs., at Newmarket.

Traveller by Highflyer, 400gs., at Newmarket.

St. David by Saltram, the Second Class of the Prince's Stakes at Newmarket.

Creepers by Tandem, 50gs. at Newmarket, 60gs. at Burford, and the King's Plates at Lichfield and Burford.

Baronet by Vertumnus, the Oatlands' Stakes at Ascot, and the King's Plates at Winchester, Lewes, Canterbury, and Newmarket.

Clementina by Vertumnus, 50g. at Swaffham, and 200gs. at Newmarket.

own 'Lord Maryborough' of those days was Colonel Leigh, just then in high favour; and George Sharpe was for some short time his huntsman, although before long superseded by a man named Grantson, who, strange as it may sound, though imported *from Epping!* to superintend a royal kennel, gave great satisfaction, and was dismissed only by death from the service of the Prince. His hounds, we are given to understand, shewed as fair a proportion of sport as could be expected from the flints and woods of Hampshire: the country, however, does not, and never did, rank high even in the list of provincials; and other *agréments*, besides the facility of hunting, had no doubt their weight in detaining his royal master as a resident. We can scarcely wonder, however, at his predilection, when we consider the particularly delightful picture of society which Hampshire at that moment presented. No party bickerings, no sporting squabbles were at any time heard; harmony and unanimity appear to have been the order of the day, from Alpha to Omega; and the whole country resembled one large and happily united family, of which their distinguished visitor was looked up to and adored as the august and beloved head. Often, no doubt, amidst the domestic troubles of his after-days, did the Prince look back with a sad satisfaction and sorrow on the quiet privacy and tranquil enjoyments of the regretted sojourn at the Grange.

The actions of men are generally spoken of according to their eccentricity from the general rule of conduct, or to their departure from that peculiar line, which the moralists of the age have chalked out as the boundary between vice and virtue. The great in infamy, as well as the great in goodness, are equally spoken of, though viewed through different media; and the villain who expiates his sins on the scaffold, and the philanthropist whose chief study is to diminish the sum of human misery, become equally the objects of the attention of the philosopher, who from those heterogeneous and discordant materials erects at last his proud edifice of the physiology of man.

It has been beautifully said by Cowper, that

Man in society is like a flower
Blown in its native bed.



But it is not less true that man, like that flower, suffers by every transplantation which he undergoes, and flourishes and degenerates accordingly as the station to which he is removed is congenial to the growth of his virtues, or to the further expansion of his vices. We have hitherto beheld the Prince of Wales moving in that exalted sphere to which he was born, the gayest amongst the gay—the proudest amongst the proud. We have seen him the idol of the court, of which he was the greatest ornament; an elegant specimen of the human form in all its most manly proportions; and, descending through the different gradations of life, we have beheld him in the common tap-room of an obscure public-house—the visitant of the polluted brothel—and the nocturnal inmate of the watch-house. It might have been supposed that these singular mutations in life, these strange and extraordinary contrasts, would have had a wonderful effect on a mind so strongly susceptible, and so keenly alive to every impression, as was that of his Royal Highness, and had he known how to have taken the proper advantage of them, would, doubtless, have rendered him, perhaps, one of the most profound adepts in the knowledge of the human character, which ancient or modern history could afford, but the lesson which they would have taught him was neglected; it was only the superficies to which he looked;—it was the simple gratification of the moment which he courted, apparently ignorant of or indifferent to the valuable mine of useful wisdom which was open to his contemplation.

Diverting our view from the different characters in which his Royal Highness has at yet appeared, we will now proceed to observe him in that of the plain country gentleman, divested of the forms and etiquette of royalty, and associating with men as different in their habits and pursuits from his former companions, and as strongly contrasted in their moral sentiments, as the anchorite of the desert and the libertine of a court. Not that the Prince was wholly estranged from the society of those whose friendship and esteem he valued, and also, to his misfortune, from those, whose pauperism obliged them to cling to him, as the ivy to the oak, for their support; but in the vicinity of his rural retreats, the great provocatives

to vice were wanting; the faro-tables of the demireps of fashion were not to be found in the houses of the gentry surrounding Kempshott Park or Critchill House, but in them he became initiated in the good and regular habits of the honest English yeoman, and had an opportunity presented to him of distinguishing the great advantages which the latter possess over the deceptions and hollow distinctions of what is surreptitiously called high life.

The cause of his Royal Highness rusticating so much at this time has been attributed to various motives. To enumerate them all would be to rake up all the gossip of those times, in which the truth was disguised or perverted according to the illiberality of mind which distinguished the propagator of the report. It is, however, an undisputed fact, that various reasons combined to induce him to seek retirement in the country, wherein he might enjoy a comparative state of tranquillity, while the storm which assailed him had spent its fury, and the loud voice of clamour was stifled which sounded against him from every quarter.

Shortly after the death of Lord Keppell we find him the tenant of Bagshot Park, the present residence of the Duke of Gloucester, during whose minority the late duke lent it to his Royal Highness. The jealousy of a certain lady, and the intrigues of a notorious countess, have been mentioned as the ostensible causes of his temporary residence at Bagshot Park; as by the former person there was a restraint put upon his actions which he could not endure, for he considered himself like the air, 'a chartered libertine,' bound to no time, circumstances, nor person; and the greater the indication of control that was manifested, the greater was his determined spirit to offer every possible opposition to its power.

It had been for some time manifest, that a degree of coolness had subsisted between his Royal Highness and Mrs. Fitzherbert, and it was universally attributed to the *egaremens* of the former in certain quarters, where, on the part of the lady, it was considered as a positive degradation of his character that he should be known to hold any connexion. That this opinion had some foundation in truth cannot be questioned, but the following may be considered as the root of the quarrel.

Amongst the most intimate friends of Mrs. Fitzherbert was the truly amiable and virtuous Miss Paget : the most interesting and sympathetic connexion had long subsisted between them—the foul breath of calumny had never tainted her character—her virtue could only be equalled by her beauty, and her talents and perfections were the theme of universal panegyric. Bruyère, in his immortal work, where he paints the manners and characters of the age in which he lived, acknowledges the power of the female sex over the heart of man. Our habits and manners are greatly influenced by our connexions with them, and they assume a higher degree of polish in proportion as the sphere of our intercourse with them is enlarged. It is, however, not only within the circle of a court that this influence is predominant ; it pervades all the different gradations of society. Its empire is universally triumphant, and perhaps in the annals of human history there never was a more abject slave to it than the Prince of Wales. The languishing look of a woman's eye, dissolving in love and desire, was to him what the moonbeam is to the mariner in a stormy night ; it was a picture, he was wont to say, that he could gaze on with delight for ever ; and although, in some respects, he could not but consider woman as Nature's most beautiful error, yet it was his pride to confess that he loved that error more than truth itself.

It is a dangerous thing for a woman, let her stand either in the relation of a wife or a concubine, to have a beautiful girl as her companion. The eye of the husband or *the friend* will, at times, wanton over that beauty ; the lynx-eyed keenness of a woman's passion will soon detect the roving glance, and jealousy, with its attendant brood of evils, springs up to annihilate every vestige of earthly happiness.

That the beauty of Miss Paget should fail to make an impression on the Prince of Wales could never be expected by any one in the least conversant with the susceptibility of the heart of his Royal Highness ; but in his endeavours to obtain a conquest over her virtue, his failure was complete. Nevertheless, it was evident to Mrs. Fitzherbert that some negotiations were pending between Miss Paget and his Royal Highness ; and as she could not discover their exact tendency, their

probability was taken into the account, and, consistently with the opinion which is generally formed on such occasions, they could only refer to *one* point, and that point was one of all others most likely to excite her indignation.

—————Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ—

and it must be allowed that the following discovery was sufficient to arouse the jealousy even of the most placid female.

It was well known to Mrs. Fitzherbert that an epistolary correspondence had been for a short time carried on between Miss Paget and his Royal Highness; but of the import of it, Mrs. Fitzherbert was wholly ignorant. Nevertheless, it was the cause of great uneasiness to her, for to what other subject could it refer than to the expression of a mutual attachment; indeed not the most distant idea entered the head of Mrs. Fitzherbert, that it could have the least reference to a transaction of a private and confidential nature, in which Miss Paget was acting a part in perfect accordance with the well-known generosity of her disposition. Jealousy is generally allied with meanness; for there is scarcely any action so low or so base, to which that passion will not stoop to obtain its end. To arrive at the precise knowledge of the subject of the correspondence of Miss Paget and his Royal Highness, one method presented itself by which it might be accomplished; and that was the interception of one of the letters from either of the parties. In a very short time, the following letter from Miss Paget fell into the hands of Mrs. Fitzherbert.

Park Street, Sept. 11, 1792.

Miss Paget regrets that it is not in her power to comply with the wishes of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, *to their full extent*: but in a matter of so much delicacy, and in which the character of his Royal Highness is at stake, there is not anything which Miss Paget would not undertake to accomplish the purpose which he has in view, and thereby contribute to his personal happiness. As secrecy in matters of this kind is of the greatest moment, if his Royal Highness will confer the honour on Miss Paget of meeting her at the faro-table of the Duchess of Cumberland on

Tuesday night, the business may be arranged, perhaps, to the entire satisfaction of his Royal Highness.

*To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales,
Carlton House.*

The jaundiced eye invests every object with one colour ; and the construction which Mrs. Fitzherbert put upon this letter was perhaps only such as every other jealous woman would have put. In the compliance of Miss Paget to the wishes of his Royal Highness, Mrs. Fitzherbert read nothing less than the surrender of her person ; and the secrecy which was enjoined confirmed her in that opinion. The assignation at the faro-table of the Duchess of Cumberland was the climax ; it was the cope-stone of the intrigue ; and with the art and cunning natural to woman in cases of this kind, Mrs. Fitzherbert placed so much violence upon her feelings, as not to exhibit any signs of her displeasure, nor to betray, by any inuendo or remark, that she was in any degree privy to the intrigue which was going on between her dear friend, Paget, and her still dearer *friend*, the Prince of Wales : but in order to entrap them in their iniquity, she determined to repair to the faro-table of the Duchess on the night appointed in the letter ; and she then doubted not that she should arrive at the full knowledge of the design which they had in view.

The mansion of the Duchess of Cumberland in Pall Mall was at this time the resort of all the elegance and fashion in town. Her faro-table was most numerously attended ; consequently, the profits arising from it were very considerable. The Duchess, with the assistance of her lovely and amiable sister, Lady Emily Luttrell, conducted it with all imaginable decorum, never losing sight, however, of the main chance ; and a noble harvest they made of the opulent pigeons that frequented it. Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Duchess were at this time almost inseparable ; and to suppose that the former—thus honoured, thus beloved—was living in a state of fornication, would have been a most atrocious libel, not only on herself, but on all the most amiable and august personages who frequented the same society.

The expected evening came, and Mrs. Fitzherbert and Miss

Paget drove to the house of the Duchess of Cumberland. The company was uncommonly numerous: pleasure and gaiety seemed to sit on every countenance; though, now and then, the sullen frown and the deep gloom of the luckless gambler intruded themselves, as a striking contrast to the open, merry countenances of the youthful visitors who had not yet bent their knee at the shrine of the Paphian goddess. It was nearly ten o'clock before the Prince of Wales arrived—the magnet of attraction—the Adonis of the scene. The conduct of his Royal Highness towards Mrs. Fitzherbert in public was always distinguished by the most respectful attention, approaching very nearly to the most studied formality. To view them in company, the casual observer would have considered them as individuals remotely acquainted, and between whom no intimate connexion could ever have possibly existed. A formal acknowledgment was sometimes all that passed between them; and each of them frequently took their departure without bestowing on one another the slightest mark of their respect.

This formality, apparently agreed upon between them, enabled the Prince to be more profuse in his attentions in other quarters; nor did the *prima donna* of his affections appear to resent the profuse manner in which he lavished his incense at the shrine of some glowing beauty, and where she well knew the conquest of her virtue was the sole aim of his adoration.

On this evening, however, a positive assignation had been made; and there is scarcely anything in which a woman triumphs with more malicious joy than in the detection of a rival, and especially if that rival should be in any degree within the influence of her power.

The house of the Duchess of Cumberland, although not so extensive nor magnificent as some others of the noble farotable keepers, yet it was universally acknowledged that it was not surpassed by any in *convenience*. Where all understood the *specific purpose* of each apartment, interruption was never feared, and the *prima donna* with trembling anxiety looked forward to the moment when her bosom friend, whose virtue had hitherto stood as firm as the rock in the ocean, though

assailed by the most tempestuous billows, was to be led away, *to satisfy the wishes of his Royal Highness, although not to their full extent.* Every motion of the falling culprit was watched with the same keenness with which the basilisk watches its prey. At last the Prince was observed to accompany Miss Paget from the principal room ; and so thoroughly was the conviction now impressed upon the mind of the infuriated lady, that she had detected the virtuous Paget, her dearest and most confidential friend, in an amorous intrigue with his Royal Highness, that she immediately ordered her carriage and drove home, leaving the supposed culprit to find her way after her in the best possible manner she could.

On the following morning, Miss Paget was given to understand that the intimacy which had hitherto subsisted between Mrs. Fitzherbert and herself was at an end, and that it would be highly agreeable to the former lady if she would select for herself another place of residence. Confounded with this most unexpected dismissal, Miss Paget requested a personal interview, as she was not conscious to herself that she had in any manner acted injuriously to the interests of the offended lady, nor in opposition to the principles of virtue or of rectitude. The interview was refused ; nor did the offended lady condescend to assign any reason for her apparently harsh and unjustifiable conduct. In this dilemma Miss Paget applied to the Prince of Wales to intercede in her behalf, and at least to obtain from Mrs. Fitzherbert a distinct avowal of the causes which had conspired to estrange them from each other. It is, however, certain that Miss Paget could not have selected an individual more improper to espouse her cause than the Prince himself ; but he immediately undertook the office, and, on the entrance of his Royal Highness into the apartment of Mrs. Fitzherbert, he evidently saw, by the sullen frown that sat upon the beautiful countenance of the lady, that a storm was raging within, which was soon to burst upon him with all the fury of the woman who has detected her lover in an act of infidelity. The Prince heard the charge against him with the utmost indignation ; but it is reported that the lady so far transgressed the rules of decorum and good breeding, as to throw a cup of coffee into the face of his Royal Highness ;

and then, by way of climax, to declare that she would accept of the offers which had been made to her, and leave the country for ever.

There is a secret pride in conscious innocence, which enables it to rise superior to every aspersion which can be thrown upon it, and to bring discomfiture and disgrace on all those who by the restlessness of some predominant passion have attempted to throw over it the darkest shades of guilt and criminality. The Prince, as it may be easily imagined, was no stranger to the female character, and he knew well, that to restrain the volubility of a woman's tongue, at the moment when she is smarting with the pangs of jealousy, were a task as hopeless of success, as to check a rocket in its ascending flight. He, therefore, very wisely suffered the storm to exhaust itself, before he entered upon his justification, but when he was shewn the copy of the intercepted letter, as the confirmatory proof of his infidelity, and of his secret amour with Miss Paget, his indignation then could be no longer controlled, and he gloried in the opportunity which was given him of humbling the infuriated dame, and of exposing the folly and injustice of her conduct in their most glaring colours.

‘It is true,’ said the Prince, ‘that Miss Paget declares in her note, her regret that she cannot satisfy my wishes to their full extent. The construction which the jealousy of your disposition has put upon that passage, may be easily imagined, but it is in direct variance with truth. You know my embarrassments—you also know that I am in danger of having even my horses and carriage taken in execution in the open streets, if I do not come to some immediate settlement of Gray's account. I have completely exhausted my own resources; the sale of my racing stud has produced me comparatively a mere trifle, in fact, when the necessary expenses are defrayed of my establishment at Newmarket, there will not be the surplus of a pound. The connexions of Paget I know to be opulent, and I know also, that she possesses resources, from which a temporary assistance can be obtained. In my present embarrassment, I applied to her to obtain for me the loan of 10,000*l.*, and in her answer, she tells me, that she regrets that she cannot satisfy my wishes to the full extent. The secrecy she enjoins, is no more

than that general line of prudence which usually distinguishes pecuniary transactions ; and the assignation at the Duchess of Cumberland's was nothing more than to inform me of the success of her application.—On that night she delivered to me 7000*l.* in cash, and a negotiable security for the remaining 3000*l.* ; and now,' concluded the Prince, ' I leave you to the enjoyment of your feelings, at the undeserved obloquy which you have thrown on the character of a virtuous and generous girl, and I trust this circumstance will operate as a caution to you, never to throw a stain upon the character of an individual, before you are fully acquainted with all the secret springs of action, and have arrived at a genuine and undisguised exposition of the ruling motives.'

There is perhaps nothing more painful to a candid and generous mind, than to find that, misled by false appearances, we have been heaping odium and censure on the actions of our friend, and then ultimately to discover that those very actions were richly deserving of our highest approbation and gratitude. In this situation Mrs. Fitzherbert found herself in regard to Miss Paget ; she felt that she had wronged her—cruelly wronged her, and consistently with that most singular trait in the human character, Mrs. Fitzherbert, as the injurer, could not be easily brought to forgive Miss Paget, whereas the forgiveness lay entirely on the part of the latter. By degrees, however, the offended pride of the haughty dame was gradually softened down, a reconciliation took place, and to the honour of the Prince of Wales it must be recorded, that in a very short time the pecuniary obligation was satisfied, and when she afterwards became the wife of a general now living, who signalized himself in the Peninsular war, the Prince gave her away at the altar, and made her a present of a diamond necklace of the value of 2000*l.*

It must, however, be mentioned, that this circumstance did not tend to exalt Mrs. Fitzherbert in the opinion of the Prince, and that it was the cause of establishing a coolness between them, which, in conjunction with some other unpleasant circumstances, induced the Prince to retire into the country. The following may be considered as the different residences which his Royal Highness successively occupied,

and where, in some respects, his health and constitution were repaired from the consequences of the libertine life which he had led in the immediate vortex of the metropolis.

From Bagshot Park he removed to Kempshott Park, between Basingstoke and Popham-lane; afterwards to the Grange, Hants; and latterly to Critchill House, near Blandford, Dorset. His residence at the latter place was very short, owing to an amour in which he was detected with the only daughter of a gentleman resident in the neighbourhood, and heiress to the whole of his property. This affair, however, did not pass off quite so smoothly as some others in which he had been engaged, for the father being a determined, high-spirited man, and endowed with uncommon personal strength, hesitated not one day to give his Royal Highness that summary pugnacious punishment, which rendered his future residence at Critchill House rather unpleasant to him. He therefore returned to Brighton, and between that place and the metropolis he now passed the chief part of his time.

The legitimate succession to the crown now became the theme of the most serious consideration, not only with the royal parents of the Prince, but also with the ministers of the country. The most tempting offers were held out to his Royal Highness to induce him to enter into the married state; but he rejected them with the most determined spirit, alleging, as the ground of his refusal, that from the knowledge he possessed of his own character, he was certain he was not calculated for the marriage state; and that were he to enter into that union, it would only be to establish the misery of both parties, without, perhaps, being productive of the purpose for which it was intended. That this studied opposition to the dearest wishes of his august father could not fail to widen the breach between them may be easily conceived; and it is natural to suppose that those individuals who were suspected of possessing a domineering influence over the conduct of his Royal Highness, were visited with the whole weight of the resentment of the royal parents, who beheld in the attachment of their son to certain ladies, the chief and the almost insuperable obstacle to his entering into the married state; accordingly every engine was set to work which malignity or malice

could devise to inflame the minds of the people against those individuals ; whilst, at the same time, secret agents were employed to pry into their private affairs, and wherever an opening presented itself, there to inflict such a death-wound as no after palliative could remedy. The venal part of the public press was bribed to circulate the most inflammatory reports respecting the ulterior views of the reputed friends of the Prince of Wales, and the ruinous consequences that must inevitably await the country from his avowed attachment to the Roman Catholic party ; in which attachment it was pretended to foresee the gradual downfall of the Protestant religion, and the return of England, when the time should come that he was to sway the sceptre of it, to all the superstitious doctrines of the Romish Church.

On the other hand, the Prince rallied around him a most powerful party, and it must be acknowledged, that the superiority of talent displayed by his friends tended, in a great degree, to turn the tide of popular feeling in his favour ; indeed to such an excess of enthusiasm was the contest carried, that on one occasion the populace took the horses from Mrs. Fitzherbert's carriage, and drew it to her residence. By the serious and reflecting part of the community, these ebullitions of popular feeling were regarded as a sinister omen of the future state in which the country would be plunged, if by any interposition of Providence the royal functions were to be again suspended, and the reins of government placed in the hands of the Prince's party. Fortunately, however, for the nation at large, the public attention was directed to a circumstance, at this moment of paramount interest, as far as regarded the succession to the crown, and that was the marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of York with the Princess Frederica Charlotte Ulrica, the eldest daughter of the late King of Prussia. His Royal Highness, during his residence in Germany, had conceived an affectionate attachment to the Princess, and the sentiment being mutual, the consent of parents on both sides was soon obtained to the marriage, which ceremony took place at Berlin on the 29th of September, 1791. On their journey from Prussia to this country they were much annoyed by the brutal mobs, which then abounded in

every town and village, committing the most atrocious excesses in the name of liberty, and insulting, as aristocrats, all persons who had a respectable equipage. At Lisle, their Royal Highnesses were exposed to considerable danger from the savage rabble, whom the arms on the carriage had attracted, and who kept possession of the vehicle till they had completely satisfied their revolutionary spirit by obliterating the ensigns of royalty. After encountering many dangers, the royal party at length reached the more tranquil shores of England; and, on the 18th of November, arrived at York House in London, where the Prince of Wales received his royal sister in the great hall, and congratulated her, in the German language, on her arrival in England.

It may be necessary to show the prominent part which the Prince of Wales enacted in the ceremonies of this marriage, in order to show how far the etiquette of a court can demand that the smile of personal esteem and affection shall sit upon the countenance, whilst some of the most deadly passions of our nature are rankling in the heart. The relation in which the Prince of Wales stood at this time, in regard to his royal father, was any thing but one of affection, and yet to behold them, in their mutual intercourse with each other, subject to the forms and ceremonies of a court, the uninitiated observer might be led to draw the conclusion, that the father and the son were upon the most friendly and affectionate terms with each other.

On the Sunday after the arrival of the Duke of York, he walked to Carlton House, and returned with the Prince of Wales, who stayed at York House more than an hour. He then took his leave, but in about two hours returned, for the purpose of accompanying the Duchess to Buckingham House, whither he went with her Royal Highness in her own carriage; the Dukes of York and Clarence following them. On their arrival, the Duchess of York was conducted by the Prince of Wales on his right hand, and the Duke on his left, into the grand dining-room, in which were seated the King, Queen, and six of the princesses, all of whom rose and advanced into the middle of the room to meet the illustrious stranger, who dropped on her knees before their majesties, but was instantly

raised by the King, who conducted her to a seat by the side of the Queen.

A few days afterwards their Majesties, accompanied by the Princesses, paid a visit to York House, and the etiquette of the palace was strikingly exemplified on this occasion ; for the King and Queen never forgot the old school of ceremonies, even with their children on public occasions. After reciprocal salutations in the great hall, the royal party were led to the lower apartment, fronting the park, where tea was served, and the following ceremony observed :—the Prince of Wales, in the first place, was to attend as lacquey on the King, and hand to him the tea, which was first brought to the door by the servants, then taken by the servants of the Duke's establishment, who handed the trays to the Prince of Wales, and his Royal Highness *then attended upon his Majesty*. The Duke of York received other tea-trays through the same channels, and handed them to the Duchess of York, who was to wait on the Queen in the capacity of a servant. Such were the manners of the olden court of George III. ; and, perhaps, it would be a curious subject of investigation to inquire from what source this curious custom took its origin. It certainly is not British, and most probably was an importation from the latitude of Mecklenburg Strelitz.

On the 23rd of November their Royal Highnesses were re-married according to the formulæ of the Church of England, the Prince of Wales giving away the bride, and afterwards attesting the certificate of the marriage.

There were several persons at this time, forming a kind of circle of which the Prince of Wales was the focus, who dreaded nothing more than a reconciliation of their patron with his illustrious parent ; and who, in the event of that circumstance taking place, beheld their own discomfiture, and the frustration of all the plans which they had laid for their future aggrandizement. It should not be concealed, in order to purify the character of his Royal Highness from a deep stain that has been thrown upon it, in regard to his utter desertion of several of his intimates, who, perhaps, having been carried into the vortex of his extravagance, with very slender fortunes to support it, were at last reduced to the

lowest stage of pauperism, and becoming the tenants of a prison. It is, however, a fact, well known in a particular circle, that the Prince granted some very liberal pensions to many of his destitute companions; and we have only to mention the late Felix M'Carthy, a needy Irish adventurer, but a man of infinite wit,—at the same time destitute of all principle and honour. Still he was received at the table of his Royal Highness, to whom he was introduced by Lord Moira, who, though certainly the steadiest of his late Majesty's friends, was, on account of his improvidence, and his total ignorance of the value of money, a very unfit person to be the adviser of the Prince. His Lordship was continually in debt, and raising money upon post-obits and other securities, at enormous rates. His royal companion and friend did the same; and the Prince's promissory notes to his Lordship, and his Lordship's promissory notes to his Royal Highness, were at any time to be obtained at one quarter of their value*. It was, however, with such men as M'Carthy,—Henry Bate Dudley, alias the Fighting Parson,—George Hanger,—and others of that grade, that the Prince lost his character and his money. When the former of these worthies was a tenant of the King's Bench Prison, he was chiefly supported by the bounty of the Prince, who used to transmit his grants under an envelope, addressed to 'The Irish Giant, now exhibiting on the other side of the water.' The Prince ultimately granted him a pension of 200*l.* a year, but which was only paid for two years, on account of the intemperate habits of Felix, which brought him prematurely to the grave.

It was such men as these who had good reason to dread the reconciliation of the Prince with his father; for they knew it would be the signal for their removal to a different sphere of life, and their return to their native haunts of insignificance. There are various versions existing of the following circumstance, and the precise motive has been differently represented,

* We can state it as a fact, that two promissory notes of his Royal Highness, and of Lord Moira, for 1000*l.* each, and an acceptance of the late Archbishop of Canterbury for 500*l.*, were offered by a butcher in St. James' market to a notorious discounter of bills, living in Piccadilly, who observed that he had never had such a trinity of trash offered to him before. The whole were obtained for 250*l.*, the Prince's being valued at 150*l.*; his Lordship's and his Grace's at 50*l.* each.

some considering it as the act of a deliberate thief, whilst others looked upon it as a studied manœuvre to put an end to the conversation which was then passing between his Royal Highness and his august parent.

The drawing-room which was given in honour of the marriage of the Duke of York was declared to be unequalled for the splendour and number of the visiters. Towards the close of it, the King and the Prince were standing in very earnest conversation, the crowd around them being very great, when on a sudden the Prince felt a most violent pull at the handle of his sword. On turning round quickly, he perceived that the diamond guard was torn off, and hanging by the wire, the elasticity of which alone had saved the jewels, which amounted in value to between three and four thousand pounds. The Prince did not expose the depredator; for he had some shrewd suspicion on his mind that theft was not the object of the individual. It, however, excited a considerable degree of sensation; and if the object of the person was the interruption of the discourse, he fully succeeded in his design; for the King and Prince immediately separated, and never entered into conversation again, during the remainder of the evening.

As in a future part of this work, when we come to discuss the proceedings in parliament on the payment of the Prince's debts, we shall have occasion to refer to those which took place in the House of Commons, on the question of a provision for their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, we think it necessary to insert the following abridgment of them.

It was at an early period in the session of 1792, that the establishment of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York came under consideration; and on this occasion the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that the sum of eighteen thousand pounds annually should be granted out of the consolidated fund, to be computed from July 5th, 1791, which, added to the twelve thousand already granted to his Royal Highness from the civil list, and likewise to seven thousand which it was intended to give him out of the Irish revenue, would render the amount of his whole income thirty-seven thousand pounds per annum. He also proposed that her Royal Highness' jointure, upon the contingency of her

surviving the Duke, should be eight thousand pounds, payable out of the Consolidated Fund.

The sentiments of ministry and the leaders of opposition on this subject seemed perfectly to coincide, except that the latter rather wished to go farther, and not only grant his Royal Highness an annuity for life, but enable him, by a suitable present, to commence, as a married man, with princely splendour. The minister, having no proposition of the last kind in command from his Majesty, could not make a motion to any such effect. Mr. Fox warmly deprecated the idea of reducing a prince of the blood to the necessity of raising money on an annuity. It was, however, on the other hand, observed that, as the grant would take place from July, 1791, the amount of half of it would be immediately at his Royal Highness' disposal.

Notwithstanding the general coincidence of opinion in Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, the House was by no means unanimous. Mr. Burdon thought 18,000*l.* too great an allowance, and proposed 10,000*l.* in its stead. He was supported by several gentlemen, particularly by Sir James Johnstone, who conceived that the Duke's revenues from Osnaburgh should be taken into consideration, which he stated to amount to 35,000*l.* per annum. Sir William Dolben seemed of the same opinion with respect to the propriety of considering the revenue from Osnaburgh, but did not think it exceeded 12,000*l.* Mr. M. A. Taylor (who approved of the original sum proposed) asserted that the revenue did not nett above 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* a year.

Amidst such a contrariety of opinions, Mr. Fox remarked, where should they look for an ultimate decision? In fact, it was unusual, improper, and undignified, for a British House of Commons to calculate the income of a German principality, when called upon to support the splendour of a British prince. With his accustomed shrewdness of application, he exclaimed, 'Did gentlemen forget that monarchy was an essential part of our constitution; and would they act upon the levelling principle of the meanest republic, and sink their princes to the rank of private gentlemen? If the people chose to have the benefit and pageantry of monarchy, it was beneath them to grudge at the necessary expense of it.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer supported Mr. Fox in the

assertion, that we had no right to inquire into the expenditure of the revenue of Osnaburgh.

Mr. Burdon's proposal was rejected, and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer passed without a division.

From these scenes of courtly magnificence and splendour, we turn to others of a very opposite character, and which have a direct tendency to impugn the character, not only of the Prince of Wales, but of some other branches of the royal family, and more especially that of their subordinate agents, to whom a stigma attaches, in the catastrophe of the following transaction, which no after-explanation has been sufficient to wipe away. It is not in our power exactly to point out the individuals who were the secret agents in the tragedy, nor are there any documents in existence by which the crime can be brought home to the real perpetrators; at the same time we cannot for a moment entertain the idea, that either of the royal princes was privy to the act, but that it was wholly planned and matured by men of needy and desperate fortunes, who having no character to lose, were willing to plunge into the commission of any crimes by which their circumstances might be improved; especially if they had the protecting shield of high authorities to conceal them from detection. In one respect, however, and it is a very important political one, the following transaction will show to what secret purposes that most odious of all enactments the Alien Act was applied, and whilst it was alleged by the ministers of the day, that it was introduced solely for the purpose of preventing the domiciliation of foreigners in this country, who might be the secret agents of Buonaparte, yet that it was frequently applied to the removal of persons out of the country, who were not tainted with any political offence, and who, in fact, had visited it with no other view than the enforcement of their rightful claims, as creditors, on some particular branches of the royal family.

We have followed his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales through a career of profligacy and extravagance, unexampled in any prince of ancient or modern times; we have seen him reduced to the necessity of applying to the parliament of the country, for relief from the accumulated weight of debt that was

pressing so heavily upon him; and under the most solemn promises of reform and amendment, we have beheld the country liberally coming forward with the desired relief, and placing the heir-apparent of the throne in the possession of that income which was fully adequate to maintain the dignity and splendour of his station. The severe lessons, however, which are taught in the school of adversity, appear, in the case of his Royal Highness, to have lost all their efficacy—their influence was that of the moment, for he no sooner found himself extricated from one embarrassment, than he heedlessly rushed into another, more deep and humiliating than any of the preceding ones. That sense of shame, which operates even on ordinary minds, formed no part of his moral character—he commenced his life as he closed it, vain-glorious, profligate, and extravagant; he seemed not to feel nor to understand the duties of his station—all his gratifications were selfish—all his indulgencies sensual. Real friends he had none—but of needy dependants he had a crowd, and ‘the most finished gentleman of Europe’ was content to reign over a palace occupied by none but courtezans and parasites. Education, which corrects and modifies the passions of other men, appeared to have no other tendency than to confirm and strengthen his in all their plenitude and force. The moral beauty of virtue, emasculated in the festivities of vice, and the debaucheries of a harem, possessed, in his sight, no fixed nor permanent value. Without eyes for pure and innocent forms, every thing was meretricious about him; innocence sunk abashed in his presence, and modesty turned from his gaze. The gallery of English beauties was the fascination of voluptuousness, and the walls of Carlton House were ‘aspic’ to every woman’s character, who had the misfortune to attract his notice.

We doubt not that we shall call down upon our heads the bitter animadversions of the senseless tribe of courtiers and of menials, who conceive that because, ‘there is a divinity which doth hedge a king,’ it becomes at once an act criminal and unjust to portray him as the *man*, and to hold him up to view with all the vices and imperfections by which he was distinguished in his career through life. If, to gratify a selfish

passion—if, to obtain the indulgence of a sensual desire, a prince or a monarch has lost sight of the interests of the country, and set at defiance every principle of morality and virtue, we will not, to gain the empty applause of a courtly circle, screen him from the merited indignation which naturally arises in the breast of the good and virtuous, at the infraction of those moral duties, by which the great chain of human society is held together. In the delineation of a royal character, the varnish of mystification may suit the parasite and the hireling; we will paint it as we have *seen* and *known* it, and although the sight of the picture may be repellent to *some*, we shall persevere, unintimidated by threats, to use our colours accordingly as the scenes present themselves; and when we give the last finishing touch, it will stand as a portrait for after ages, to contemplate with mingled feelings of approbation and disgust.

In order faithfully to depicture the transaction which now comes under our immediate notice, it will be necessary to introduce two individuals on the canvass, one of whom is the present monarch of the country, and the other, the late Duke of York. Of the latter personage, it will be merely requisite to state, that on his return to this country from his military education in Prussia, he brought with him the prevailing vice of the majority of the courts of Germany—that of gambling; and to his inordinate attachment to this ruinous propensity, may be attributed the deep disgrace which he was often obliged to endure, as well as the total ruin of his property and fortune. Previously to his marriage, he was little inferior to his elder brother in his attachment to the female sex, and the expenses which he incurred in some of his establishments for his mistresses, joined to other pursuits of a still more extravagant nature, soon reduced him to such a condition, as actually to have his carriage and horses taken in execution in the open streets, and himself obliged to dismount and return to his residence on foot. In conjunction with his royal brothers, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence, every source was tried in this country from which such a supply could be raised as would avert the storm which impended over their heads; but all their endeavours failed, and as the last resource, the Prince of

Wales was advised to try to raise a loan in Holland, and Messrs. Bonney and Sunderland, then of George-yard, Lombard-street, were appointed notarial agents for the verification of the bonds, and the late Mr. Thomas Hammersley of Pall-Mall, banker, was to receive the subscriptions and to pay the dividends thereon to the holders on the joint bonds of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and the Duke of Clarence. The sum intended to be raised was 3,600,000 guilders, about one million sterling, the greater part of which, there is every reason to believe, was subscribed for by foreign houses only, at a price extremely beneficial to the subscribers, provided the conditions of the contract had been faithfully kept. The negotiation for this loan commenced in 1788, but an interruption to its final completion, was occasioned by the death of Mr. Bonney, the notary, and it was ultimately confirmed, to the great loss of those who had so rashly speculated in such a questionable security. The interest of the loan was to bear six per cent., and all the revenues and appendages of their Royal Highnesses were to be vested in the hands of the Dukes of Portland and Northumberland, and of other trustees of the first distinction, for the due payment of the interest and principal of the loan. The dishonourable part of this transaction now commences: a great portion of the money had been received by the Princes, to the amount of nearly half a million, and the remainder was in the course of payment, when the revolution in France, of 1792, presented a tempting opportunity to resist the payment of those bonds which had been issued, and even the interest which was due was refused. It happened, however, that the revolution drove some of the holders of the bonds to England, as an asylum; and numerous applications in person, or by the representatives of several of the holders, were made to the three Princes, for the discharge of, or at least for the interest which had become due on their obligations. The chicanery of the law now stepped in, and it was pretended by the legal advisers of the Princes, that their bonds had by various means got into hands which were not entitled to the interest assigned; it being alleged that the *bond fide* holders had perished during the troubles in France and Holland, and, consequently, that the grantors could not be legally bound to

admit their claims. On the other hand, it was contended that the bonds being transferable securities, it mattered not into whose hands they had fallen, nor was it a question decisive of their validity, as to the nature or the extent of the consideration which had been given for them. It was sufficient to produce them in order to entitle the holders to all the benefits accruing from their possession, in the same manner as if they had been the actual subscribers to the loan. In this evasive attempt to resist the validity of the bonds, a wound was inflicted on the character of the royal Princes, which was never afterwards wholly healed. It was considered as a base and dishonourable artifice to obtain possession of an immense sum on proposed securities, declared and recognized at first as transferable, but the payment of which was to be resisted, on the ground that the existing holders were not the original ones, and that the possession of the bonds had been obtained by sinister and fraudulent measures.

It should be here stated, out of a proper respect for the character of the present King, that he appears to have been drawn into these transactions, not from any very pressing pecuniary exigencies of his own, but from a laudable and generous disposition to assist his elder brothers in extricating them from their embarrassments, by offering himself as a collateral security for the due payment of the bonds. And this opinion is in a great measure confirmed by the circumstance, that when George III. was informed of the negotiations which were going on for the loan, he expressed the high sense of his indignation in no measured terms, at the Duke of Clarence being drawn in to sign the bonds, and thereby rendering himself liable to the payment of an enormous sum of money, with all its accumulating interest, which might eventually reduce him to the condition of abject pauperism. The evil was, however committed before the transaction became known to George III., and the only question now under consideration was the remedy to be applied, in order to avert the ruin which impended over the three elder branches of his family. A compromise was at first projected with all the *bonâ fide* holders of the bonds, and that the option should be given to them of receiving at once half the amount which had been advanced in full liquidation of

the obligations, or to receive the whole at such stated periods, and in such sums, as the finances of the borrowers could afford. It is most probable that the latter proposal would have been immediately accepted by the majority of the holders, who had now discovered that the security given was not so solid as had been represented; but the legal advisers of the crown again stepped in, and recommended a total denial of the validity of the bonds, and, consequently, of the responsibility of the grantors. In order, however, to try the latter question, an application was made to the Court of Chancery by a Mr. Martignac, one of the original bondholders, who offered, as such, to verify the security, and the matter came on regularly to be heard, by way of motion, when Sir Arthur Pigott, who was then Attorney-General to the Duchy of Cornwall, stated in answer, that he had never heard of the existence of such bonds, and that if such obligations had been contracted, the court must be aware of the difficulties, after the occurrences which had taken place in France and Holland, attending the identification of the *bond fide* holders, as well as the liability of the grantors, provided such securities should be discharged. The immediate impression on his own mind, said Sir Arthur, negatived the existence of such bonds, although he should feel it to be his duty to make the necessary inquiries in the proper quarter, and mention the matter again in court, as soon as he had any communication to make.

On the other side, the applicant stated, that the bonds had not only existed, but were still in existence, and that those to which he was legally entitled were then in his possession, and that he appeared there in person to enforce his claim. The motion was then disposed of, with the understanding that Sir Arthur Pigott should mention it again at as early a day as possible. This, however, Sir Arthur neglected to do, and the court was again moved by the claimant, when it appeared, to the astonishment of all, that Sir Arthur had entirely forgotten the business. It was, however, finally agreed to confer at chambers on the subject, and the matter was no more heard of.

This conduct of Sir Arthur Pigott constitutes one of not the least extraordinary features of this singular transaction, and it

goes a great way to prove to what shifts and expedients a lawyer can have recourse, in order to bolster up a rotten and indefensible cause. In the first place, with the most unblushing effrontery, he declared that he had never heard of the existence of the bonds in question; and that he verily believed no such obligations ever were in existence. Can it for a moment be credited, that Sir Arthur Pigott, the legal adviser of the Prince of Wales, could enter the Court of Chancery, with the ignorance of a fact on his mind, which was then notorious, not only in this country, but in every part of the continent? The bonds in question were then floating in the money market as common as any other negotiable security. There was scarcely a broker on the Exchange, who had not some of them in his possession to dispose of; and it was well known, that secret agents were employed to depreciate their value, in order that they might be bought up at the lowest price; and it was no later than the year 1829, that Mr. Charles, of Canterbury, had laid before him notarial copies of the whole of the arrangements, bonds, &c., verified in France by a French notary, upon which legal proceedings were threatened, but which were never carried into effect, on the ground, it is believed, of a compromise having been entered into with the holders.

It is not improbable that Sir Arthur Pigott was obliged to act up to the instructions given to him, and that the part which he had to perform was one of great difficulty and delicacy. His denial of the existence of the bonds, however, tended in a great degree to excite the animosity of the holders, and to make them more clamorous for the liquidation of their claims. The fact also having transpired of the successful issue of the application of Mr. Martignac to the Court of Chancery, the applicants considered that the path was chalked out to them by which they could be equally successful; and, consequently, a number of holders on the continent hastened to this country, for the sole purpose of enforcing their claims, without investing themselves with any political character, or mixing themselves up with either of the great contending parties, which were then struggling in France against the despotism and fanaticism of the Bourbon race.

At this period, that weak and imbecile minister, Lord Sidmouth, held the seals of the Home department; and it was under his administration that the odious Alien Act was put into its fullest force: the spirit of espionage, so uncongenial to the principles of a free constitution, like that of England, was carried to an extent hitherto unknown in this country; and the unoffending foreigner, who had sought an asylum on the British shores from the troubles which devastated his own country, was, on the mere breath of suspicion, or some anonymous information, taken secretly from his bed, and without knowing the nature of the offence which he had given, hurried out of the country, and thrown upon a hostile shore, into the possession of his most implacable enemies, to meet the immediate death of the traitor. As a powerful political engine, at a period of anarchy and rebellion, when kings were fighting for their thrones, and nations for their constitutions, the exercise of the Alien Act might have been tolerated under circumstances of an imperious nature. It is, however, the abuse of it of which we complain, and its application to individuals, whose cases came not within the sphere of its operation, according to the principles on which the alien laws were founded. In no instance; perhaps, was the severity of the Alien Act carried to a greater extent, than in the case of the holders of the bonds of the royal princes. They came to this country to enforce a just and long-standing claim for monies which they had advanced on the security of the future monarch of it, and of his illustrious brothers; and, certainly, it must be acknowledged that if circumstances did not admit of the immediate liquidation of those claims, that degree of courtesy was due to the claimants which is always readily and willingly granted from a debtor to his creditor, in the most ordinary transactions of life. The exact reverse, however, was the case with the unfortunate bondholders of the Princes. Their claim was disputed on the ground that they were not the *original* holders. In vain they argued that they had given a *bonâ fide* consideration for them, and therefore that their title was unquestionable to all the advantages which would have resulted to the original holders, in whose shoes they considered themselves to be then standing. This argument was blinked by the subterfuge, that no proof

had been given of any *bond fide* consideration having been paid; that the revolution in France, and the consequent troubles in the adjacent countries, had completely altered the political relations of England, and had placed the responsibility of the grantors of the bonds on a very different footing than it stood at the time when the security was entered into. This, however, was a species of reasoning which the bondholders could not, or would not, understand. They considered the laws of England to be open to them, and to those laws they expressed their determination to appeal for redress. The temper of the English people was not at this period in a state to endure any fresh cause of excitation; much less one which bore immediately upon the extravagance and profligacy of their princes. The French were then reading a most powerful lesson to the Bourbon princes, on the wasteful expenditure of the nation's riches; and it was feared, not without some substantial grounds, that the English people might be disposed to read the same lesson, in equally expressive terms, to some of their own princes, the catastrophe of which might close in the same manner as had been exhibited in France. An immediate adjustment of the bonds was certainly the most efficient method of stifling the clamour of the claimants; but, although advisable in one point of view, it was attended in another with the greatest danger and embarrassment to the parties concerned; for, on the return of the claimants to the continent, rejoicing in the success of their application, the whole host of the holders would tread in the same steps, and repair instantly to England, to substantiate their claim upon the royal Princes. In the mean time, the claimants then in the country shewed by their proceedings that the threat of an appeal to the laws was not an idle breath; and it was judged necessary and highly politic that an immediate stop should be put to them. Accordingly, without a single moment's notice, the whole of the claimants were taken up under the Alien Act, and being put on board a vessel in the Thames, it set sail immediately for Holland; but, *for a particular purpose*, it cast anchor at the Nore, under pretence of waiting for the necessary papers from the Secretary of State's office.

And here begins the gravamen of the charge which we make

against the constituted authorities of this country, in the commission of an act which might have been tolerated under the tyranny of a Nero, or the ferocious despotism of a Russian autocrat. The charge is one dark and dreadful;—dark in the secrecy and mystery which still hangs over the transaction;—dreadful, as it implies the commission of an act which could only have been engendered in the head of a fiend, and which the hands of fiends could alone have executed. We know not on what head to attach the enormity of the crime; but for the sake of the country which could have nurtured such a head in its bosom, we should hail an official and authentic denial of the fact, as the happy removal of a stain upon its character, which now adheres to it with the most obstinate tenacity, extending in its inflictions to the very highest quarters, and implicating individuals in the estimation of foreign nations, which were heretofore accustomed to regard the British character as a compound of all that was noble and dignified in human nature.

It was openly declared in a *certain* quarter, that the act was one of mere accident—one of those casualties against which no human foresight could prevail. But it is not customary to throw the veil of secrecy and mystery over a mere accident; for where an evident desire of concealment is manifested, there is generally something more than accident or casualty behind. The particulars of the tragical catastrophe were known but to few; and it was not the interest of those few to divulge all they knew upon the subject. Rumour, which is generally very busy on occasions of this kind, obtained but a very partial insight into the affair; but still such a sufficiency was gathered as to sanction and confirm the suspicion that accident had very little to do in the affair, but that the whole was a deep-laid, diabolical plan to prevent the unfortunate holders of the bonds from giving any further trouble on the score of their claims.

In some cases, presumptive evidence is as strong as positive proof; and it were natural to presume that the crew of the vessel in which the bondholders were embarked must have had some very powerful reasons for taking to their boat at night, and landing on the nearest shore: but most extraordinary it was that, before they reached it, not a vestige of the vessel

which they had just left was discernible above water—it had sunk, and every soul on board perished. If accident had any share in this catastrophe, it must be attributed to a power which distributes the evil and the good in this world according to its own wise and inscrutable dispensations; but if it sprang from premeditation and design, on the head of man let the whole weight of the ignominy rest; and when the day of retribution comes, the spirits of the victims will rise from the deep, the hour of vengeance has arrived, and woe to those on whom its weight may fall!

Speaking finally of these bonds, it is a question of no trifling import to his present Majesty, how far his liability extends to the liquidation of those which are still outstanding, and for which no provision has been made by either of his royal brothers deceased. The validity of the documents has been repeatedly acknowledged, either by payment in full, or by compromise; and as several of the bonds appeared so late as 1829, it is not improbable that many others are still in existence, the payment of which may be demanded, and which must now fall solely on his present Majesty. It may be important to remark, that when the question of the payment of the Prince of Wales' debts was agitated in parliament, shortly after his marriage, it was stated by the Duke of Clarence, that this foreign loan was put a stop to by the *Secretary of State*. We have fully exposed the particular measures which that minister adopted for effecting the end in view.

We have had few occasions hitherto to regard the Prince of Wales in his political character; but he was always, as is usual with heirs-apparent in this country, an ostensible rallying point of parliamentary opposition to his father's government. His Royal Highness, in his professed adherence to the party out of office, felt conscious of the exercise of an independent power, which gained him popularity, and cost him nothing. Whig doctrines have a smack of liberty about them; they were showy appendages to a prince, and wore handsomely in fine weather, when all was calm and sunshine; but the sunshine did not last for ever. The French revolution came, and menaced all thrones, and royal families, and courtly institutions, with destruction. The King and his ministers made war upon

this foe. The Whig leader and his partisans were compelled to struggle against the course adopted by the minister, or they must have been extinguished as an opposition; and this again forced them into a constructive and reputed, though certainly an undesigned co-operation with those who laboured under the reproach of being Jacobins, and at least theoretic rebels. The Prince, therefore, less than any man inclined to lose his caste or incur peril for such a cause, bade farewell to the opposition, in a speech against revolutionary politics, and was thenceforth designated by Mr. Fox's friends as one unworthy of political trust or attachment. The Prince of Wales was nevertheless associated in this censure with some of the ablest and most estimable individuals of their generation. Burke, with Windham by his side, and in their trains Lords Spencer, Fitzwilliam, and the Bentincks, expounded the mystery of the times in the sense in which it was understood by the heir-apparent, and transferred their influence to the king's government, embarked as it then was in the quarrel of constitutional liberty, against headlong violence and injustice. The Prince of Wales appears not to have borne any active or conspicuous part in politics, between the day in which he ceased to countenance the Foxite opposition, and that far more memorable epoch in December, 1810, at which, on the mental demise of George III., his Royal Highness assumed the government of these realms as Prince Regent.

In 1793, the Duke of York's military duties were called into active service in the Netherlands, and in 1794, the Duke of Kent commanded the grenadier brigade in the attacks on Guadaloupe and Martinique, under Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis. The Duke of Clarence had been devoted to the navy, and the Prince of Wales, then Colonel of the 10th regiment of light dragoons, felt most severely his leading a life of inactivity and of inglorious ease. He entreated his royal father to employ him in some military capacity, and at the time of the threatened invasion, his request was pressed more warmly. The following is the letter which he addressed to his royal father.

‘ I ask,’ such was the language of the Prince on this occasion—‘ to be allowed to display the best energies of

my character, to shed the last drop of my blood in support of your Majesty's person, crown, and dignity; for this is not a war for empire, glory, or dominion, but for existence. In this contest, the lowest and humblest of your Majesty's subjects have been called on; it would, therefore, little become me, who am the first, and who stand at the very footstool of the throne, to remain a tame, an idle, and a lifeless spectator of the mischiefs which threaten us, unconscious of the dangers which surround us, and indifferent to the consequences which may follow. Hanover is lost; England is menaced with invasion; Ireland is in rebellion; Europe is at the foot of France. At such a moment, the Prince of Wales, yielding to none of your servants in zeal and devotion—to none of your subjects in duty—to none of your children in tenderness and affection—presumes to approach you, and again to repeat those offers which he has already made through your Majesty's ministers. A feeling of honest ambition, a sense of what I owe to myself and my family, and above all, the fear of sinking in the estimation of that gallant army which may be the support of your Majesty's crown, and my best hope hereafter, command me to persevere, and to assure your Majesty, with all humility and respect, that, conscious of the justice of my claim, no human power can ever induce me to relinquish it.

‘ Allow me to say, Sir, that I am bound to adopt this line of conduct by every motive dear to me as a man, and sacred to me as a prince. Ought I not to come forward in a moment of unexampled difficulty and danger?—Ought I not to share in the glory of victory, when I have every thing to lose by defeat? The highest places in your Majesty's service are filled by the younger branches of the royal family; to me alone no place is assigned; I am not thought worthy to be even the junior major-general of your army. If I could submit in silence to such indignities, I should indeed deserve such treatment, and prove, to the satisfaction of your enemies and my own, that I am entirely incapable of those exertions, which my birth and the circumstances of the times peculiarly call for. Standing so near the throne, when I am debased, the cause of royalty is wounded. I cannot sink in public opinion without the participation of your Majesty in my degradation. Therefore, every

motive of private feeling and public duty induces me to implore your Majesty to review your decision, and to place me in that situation which my birth, the duties of my station, the example of my predecessors, and the expectations of the people of England, entitle me to claim.'

From some cause, which is not generally known, this request was not acceded to. Some have attributed the refusal to the Prince's attachment to the political party opposed to the government, but the real cause is yet unrevealed.

The Prince now spent the greater portion of the few succeeding years between Carlton House and Brighton; and, unfortunately for him, very seldom identified himself with the people, whose future sovereign he was destined to become. There is, however, one trait in the private character of his Royal Highness, which deserves to be recorded, and that is, the warm interest which he took in the personal welfare of his menial servants, of which the two following anecdotes will bear ample testimony:—

Being at Brighton, and going rather earlier than usual to visit his stud, he inquired of a groom, 'Where is Tom Cross *? is he unwell? I have missed him for some days.' 'Please your Royal Highness, he is gone away.' 'Gone away!—what for?' 'Please you Royal Highness, (hesitating) I believe—for—Mr. — can inform your Royal Highness.' 'I desire to know, Sir, of you—what has he done?' 'I believe—your Royal Highness—something—not—quite correct—something about the oats.' 'Where is Mr. — †, —send him to me immediately.' The Prince appeared much disturbed at the discovery. The absent one, quite a youth, had been employed in the stable, and was the son of an old groom, who had died in the Prince's service. The officer of the stable appeared before the Prince. 'Where is Tom Cross?—what has become of him?' 'I do not know, your Royal Highness.' 'What has he been doing?' 'Purloining the oats, your Royal Highness; and I discharged him.' 'What, Sir! send him away without acquainting me!—not know whither he is gone! a fatherless boy! driven into the world from my service, with a

* This name is assumed, but his Royal Highness spoke to him with a similar characteristic familiarity of designation.

† A superior of the stable department.

blighted character! Why, the poor fellow will be destroyed: fie, ——! I did not expect this from you! Seek him out, Sir, and let me not see you until you have discovered him.' Tom was found, and brought before his royal master. He hung down his head, while the tears trickled from his eyes. After looking steadfastly at him for some moments, 'Tom, Tom,' said the Prince, 'what have you been doing? Happy it is for your poor father that he is gone; it would have broken his heart to see you in such a situation. I hope this is your first offence.' The youth wept bitterly. 'Ah, Tom! I am glad to see that you are penitent. Your father was an honest man; I had a great regard for him; so I should have for you, if you were a good lad, for his sake. Now, if I desire Mr. —— to take you into the stable again, think you that I may trust you?' Tom wept still more vehemently, implored forgiveness, and promised reformation. 'Well then,' said the gracious Prince, 'you shall be restored: avoid evil company. Go, and recover your character. Be diligent, be honest, and make me your friend; and—hark ye, Tom—I will take care that no one shall ever taunt you with what is past.'

At another time, a gentleman, whilst copying a picture in one of the state apartments at Carlton House, overheard the following conversation between an elderly woman, one of the housemaids, then employed in cleaning a stove-grate, and a journeyman glazier, who was supplying a broken pane of glass:—'Have you heard how the Prince is to-day?' said he, (his Royal Highness had been confined by illness.) 'Much better,' was the reply. 'I suppose,' said the glazier, 'you are glad of that?' subjoining, 'though to be sure it *can't* concern you much.' 'It *does* concern *me*,' replied the housemaid; 'for though I am only a humble menial, I have never been ill but his Royal Highness has *concerned* himself about me, and has always been pleased, on my resuming my work, to say, "I am glad to see you about again; I hope you have been taken good care of; do not exert yourself too much, lest you be ill again." If I did not rejoice at his Royal Highness' recovery, ay, and every one who eats his bread, we should be very ungrateful indeed!'

It must, however, be admitted, that there must ever be a

wide distinction between the prince and his people ; but just in proportion as that barrier to mutual respect and confidence is removed will the one rise in reputation, and the other manifest a propriety of conduct. When, therefore, the Prince appeared in public, he was either received with indifference, or with dislike ; and the English, who possess not the art of concealing their unfriendliness, frequently developed their feelings in noisy strains of invective and reproach. The private conduct of the Prince unfortunately tended to increase such sentiments. Although his debts had been paid—his establishment increased—his income enlarged—his palace completed, yet his creditors again became clamorous—his friends continued to be distinguished for their immoral habits, and not unfrequently the public prints announced adventures and occurrences which were as undignified as they were mortifying.

The King, who was a man as moral and virtuous in his habits and associations, as he was naturally averse from splendour and profligacy, was greatly distressed by the rumours which reached his ears, and which pained his heart ; for which reasons he frequently intimated to Mr. Pitt his desire that the heir-apparent to the throne should enter into the married state. Mr. Pitt, naturally keen and calculating, perceived objections even to that measure, and secretly endeavoured rather to persuade to a reduction of the expenditure of the Prince than to favour his marriage. On one occasion, that minister communicated his sentiments to his Majesty, and expressed in terms, ill suited to the increasing petulance of the monarch, his aversion from the project. The measure was as yet undecided, but the King was firm, and the minister, who knew how to differ without offending, and to yield when perseverance in opposition would be unavailing, from that time left the management of the matter entirely to the royal family.

It requires but a slight knowledge of the human heart, and of the principles and motives which operate in the formation of character, to enable any one to perceive, that the previous habits of the Prince of Wales were such as naturally to have engendered an aversion from the marriage state. Such aversion he did not hesitate to reveal, and his friends did not endeavour

to remove it. For the female sex he, indeed, professed admiration the most sincere, and friendship the most ardent ; but a permanent attachment, founded on the basis of mutual affection, was wholly incompatible with his character.

The marriage of the Duke of York, which was anything but a happy one, as neither his habits nor his dispositions assimilated with those of the Duchess, did not tend to remove the objections of the Prince of Wales ; and he often disclosed to an intimate friend, afterwards discarded, that he would rather forfeit his right to the crown than be plagued with a wife. Nor should such feeling in itself excite either surprise or animadversion. Habits, when of long duration, become principles of action, and how could it be expected that he, who had ruled the hearts and persons of some of the most beautiful and even accomplished of his countrywomen, could easily bring his mind to enjoy, or even endure, the retired and private joys of domestic and matrimonial life. To Mrs. Fitzherbert the Prince was really attached, although it was well known, that during his intimacy with that lady he had frequently bent his knee at the shrine of other goddesses ; but the latter was a fleeting passion, whilst Mrs. Fitzherbert continued to exercise her dominion over his passions and judgment, by presenting to him, in fearful array, the horrors of a matrimonial connexion. Yet, after marriage, the conduct of that lady was, on the whole, dignified and proper ; and even the Princess of Wales herself habitually spoke of her in friendly terms. That Mrs. Fitzherbert should be unfriendly to the marriage of the Prince is not at all astonishing. Her dignity, her fortune, her rank, her happiness, would all, of course, naturally suffer by the arrangement ; and, therefore, before she should be censured, it ought to be recollected, that very few would not have so felt and acted. Nor should it be omitted to be recorded, in an impartial narrative of these events, that that lady, after the marriage had taken place, though disappointed and chagrined by the circumstance, did not endeavour longer to exercise her influence over her previous acquaintance ; and that, although the connexion between her and the Prince was subsequently renewed, it was by his desire, and not at her request.

The King now became still more desirous than formerly for the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The Duke of York had no issue by his marriage, and it was considered by the royal family, and the physicians of the Duchess, that issue was not to be expected. The King was advancing in years—the Prince was then thirty-two, and state policy suggested to his Majesty the propriety of providing for the succession.

Unhappily for the Prince, for the royal family, and for the nation, the pecuniary embarrassments of the Prince of Wales at this time compelled him to apply to his father, and to Mr. Pitt, for further assistance. The former recommended marriage, and the latter did not offer to it any objections. His Majesty had made it a matter of public conversation and correspondence; and in two letters to his sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, he had pointedly adverted to the subject. It appears to be indisputable, that the Duchess had in consequence conceived some hopes that her daughter might be selected as the consort of the future King of England; and she actually expressed them to that effect to a lady of her court. Still she entertained some apprehension that her brother might object to an alliance between individuals so nearly related, and who had not possessed any opportunities of obtaining a personal acquaintanceship.

We may, perhaps, be accused of travelling out of the record, in expressing our objection to these close, and, we may add, unnatural alliances in princely families, which may be considered as the acting cause of that fatuity, which the most superficial observer must allow has in all ages been the disease of hereditary royalty and of ancient dynasty. This is a truth of such magnitude and importance, that to the interests of political philosophy its discussion is due, unfettered by all temporal and trivial considerations. If the fact be doubted, we may point out to them the cases of the Emperor Paul of Russia, the late Sovereigns of Denmark and Portugal, the deposed King of Sweden, the late King of Naples, George III. of England, &c.—a fourth or a fifth of the Kings then occupying the thrones of Europe, and consequently a proportion of mental disease infinitely greater than can be exemplified in any other rank of society. The marriage of the Prince of

Wales with the daughter of his father's sister approached very closely to incest; and this has generally been the practice of all princely families in their marriages, having usually intermarried only with persons of similar rank, of similarly depraved education, of similarly degenerated intellectual and physiological character. The royal family of Spain is more remarkable than any other for intermarriages between parties so closely allied as to be almost incestuous; and, accordingly, the ultimate result of these infamies has been the production of a sort of unnatural being—of Ferdinand, the monster; and if we look to this country, we believe there is little doubt that it will soon witness a marriage but one degree removed from incest, in the alliance of brothers' children in the persons of Prince George of Cumberland and the Princess Victoria. We consider the latter circumstance deserving of the most serious reflection; the stock of royal imbecility on hand is already sufficiently large, without incurring any further risk of increasing it.

To return from this short digression. In the year 1794, the Duke of York left this country to take the command of the British army in Germany, in the war which was then prosecuting against the French republic. After a trifling success gained over the enemy, the situation of the allied forces became extremely perilous. Pichegru, bold, intelligent, and persevering, successfully opposed the combined efforts of Clairfait, the Prince of Coburg, and the Duke of York; and the latter was compelled to fly to Antwerp. The ultimate result of the war it is here unnecessary to record. The British troops were sacrificed, the British character injured, and the British resources expended unnecessarily and unwisely; and the termination of this expedition was of the most melancholy character.

During this unfortunate campaign, the Duke of York became acquainted with his uncle the Duke of Brunswick, and to his court and family he was introduced. Such introduction was unhappily the means of that subsequent alliance, which good and wise men can never cease to deplore. The accomplishments and personal charms of the Princess Caroline made impressions of the most favourable nature on the mind of the

Duke of York, and those feelings he communicated to the Prince of Wales and to his father the king.

The preliminary objection which the Prince of Wales had invariably made when marriage was recommended to him, now appeared to the king to be removed, and he requested the former to be united to the Princess. The requisition was made at a time when the resources of the Prince were especially exhausted—when his creditors became importunate—when it became necessary to discharge some debts of honour, and when, therefore, the prospect of relief, even at any sacrifice, was desirable. The portrait of the Princess of Brunswick, which had been shewn to the Prince of Wales, represented a lady of by no means a disagreeable appearance, and the promise of the King in writing, that on the marriage of the Prince his debts should be discharged—his income increased, and the favour of his father augmented and secured, additionally operated on his mind in favour of the connexion. He consulted with Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan ; the former advised acquiescence, and the latter was less averse from the alteration. The Prince ultimately consented, and the negotiations for the marriage commenced.

Those who knew little of the Prince's character, and who discredited as calumnies the current rumours respecting his life, were eager for this earnest of a second example of domestic regularity and concord in the royal family of England, and asked each other who was to be the fortunate object of his affections? Those, however, who knew better, asked, *who was to be the victim of his necessities?* and her name was in due time announced.

This match, however, was not one of choice on either side ; for her Serene Highness had fixed her affections on a German Prince, whom she could not marry. Thus interest, indifference, and second love held out but an unpropitious prospect for the royal pair. The Princess did not withhold her consent ; although she had heard of the follies of the Prince, she had also heard of his virtues ; and his generosity and sensibility had been greatly extolled. Yet, for reasons just stated, the Princess neither did, nor could, love her future husband. The precise state of her mind cannot be better stated than in the

unguarded frankness of one of her letters to a friend, dated November 28, 1794:—

‘ You are aware, my friend, of my destiny. I am about entering into a matrimonial alliance with my first cousin, George, Prince of Wales. His generosity I regard, and his letters bespeak a mind well cultivated and refined. My uncle is a good man, and I love him very much, but I feel that I shall never be inexpressibly happy. Estranged from my connexions, my associates, my friends—all that I hold dear and valuable—I am about entering on a permanent connexion. I fear for the consequences. Yet I esteem and respect my intended husband, and I hope for great kindness and attention. But, ah me! I say sometimes I cannot now love him with ardour. I am indifferent to my marriage, but not averse to it; I think I shall be happy, but I fear my joy will not be enthusiastic. The man of my choice I am debarred from possessing, and I resign myself to my destiny. I am attentively studying the English language; I am acquainted with it, but I wish to speak it with fluency. I shall strive to render my husband happy, and to interest him in my favour, since the Fates will have it that I am to be Princess of Wales.’

This letter, in German, was addressed to one of the Princess’ countrywomen, resident in England. It has a tone of sentiment and romance which is truly painful.

The first intimation of the intended marriage was conveyed to the public in the speech which his Majesty delivered on the 30th of December, 1794, to both Houses of Parliament, in which he expressed himself in the following manner:—

‘ I have the greatest satisfaction in announcing to you the happy event of the conclusion of a treaty of marriage with the Princess Caroline, daughter of the Duke of Brunswick. The constant proofs of your affection for my person and family persuade me that you will participate in the sentiments I feel on an occasion so interesting to my domestic happiness; and that you will enable me to make provision for such an establishment as you may think suitable to the rank and dignity of the heir-apparent to the crown of these kingdoms.’

The address of the Commons to his Majesty was, as usual, a mere echo of the speech, expressing also their high satisfaction at the proposed marriage, and their extreme readiness

and cheerfulness to vote away a large sum from the public purse, for the support and maintenance of the rank and dignity of the heir-apparent.

On the 30th of December, 1794, the Princess Caroline left the court of Brunswick, attended by her mother and a retinue splendid and numerous. The acclamations of the populace followed her for several miles on her route; and those to whom she had manifested any kindness prayed to the God of Charity for his blessing on the union. During the period that elapsed from the time of her leaving Brunswick to that of quitting Cuxhaven, she studied the English language, made many enquiries as to English manners and customs, and appeared particularly anxious to be perfectly acquainted with the genius and character of the nation over whom she might one day be called to reign.

The eyes of the whole English nation were now directed to the arrival of the Princess of Brunswick: congratulatory addresses were prepared, and the powers of poetry were invoked to hail her arrival on British land. At length, on the 28th of March, 1795, she embarked in the *Jupiter*, Commodore Payne. She was accompanied by Mrs. Harcourt and Lord Malmesbury, and also by Mrs. Aston and Mrs. St. Leger, who had been sent for that purpose expressly by the Prince of Wales. Lady Jersey had also received instructions to embark from Rochester; but she returned to London with the excuse of being indisposed, and stated her inability to proceed.

We must here be allowed to call the attention of our readers to the following interesting facts concerning the treacherous and infamous conduct of Lady Jersey throughout the whole of the circumstances connected with the marriage of the Prince of Wales, which have transpired by degrees since we wrote the *Memoirs of Queen Caroline**, and which will be found to fill up many chasms in that work, for which the requisite materials could not at that time be found, or which were so studiously concealed as to defy the power of the most industrious research. The following pages of individual history will be perused with pain and regret by every one whose mind is

* Published, with the *Trial*, complete in four volumes, by Thomas Kelly, Paternoster-row.

rightly constituted, and whose heart is not incapable of noble and generous sympathy. They will carry with them the development of actual, positive misery, and one continued narrative of sorrow and suffering. Whatever might be the cause of such evils, their existence cannot be disputed; and that very reality must therefore excite pity and regret.

The whole of this affair, intensely interesting to every one who bears the name of an Englishman, carries with it reflections of the most momentous import. That the heir-apparent to the throne of a free country should be compelled, against his inclinations, to unite his destiny with an individual whom he did not love, is a circumstance which the statesman, the moralist, and the philanthropist must deplore; and that the daughter of the brave, the virtuous, and noble Duke of Brunswick should also be induced to consent to a union from which she was averse, is equally lamentable. Against such arrangements of national policy many objections to their theory might be urged; but the history of this marriage is so replete with proofs of their baneful operation, that theory is superseded by fact, and supposition by demonstration. To all nations and to all governments it must read a lesson which should never be forgotten, and which should not only be deplored, but should induce a universal determination to repeal or discontinue all laws and customs, however sanctioned by experience, or venerable for antiquity, which are the real causes of evils so dire, and which, unhappily, are as frequent as they are distressing.

It was on the 4th of April, 1795, that the *Jupiter*, having on board the Princess Caroline, anchored off Gravesend; and on the following morning she went on board one of the royal yachts, and about 12 o'clock, landed at Greenwich Hospital. The Princess was received by Sir Hugh Palliser, the governor, who conducted her to his house; but Lady Jersey did not arrive there till an hour after the Princess had landed. They both soon after retired into an adjoining room, and the dress of the Princess was changed for one which was brought from town by Lady Jersey.

Her stay at Greenwich was very short, as she departed, immediately after dressing, for town, in the same coach with Mrs. Harcourt and Lady Jersey, and arrived at St. James' a

little before three o'clock. She was immediately introduced into the apartments prepared for her reception. On her entering the palace the Prince of Wales appeared agitated, but on being introduced to her, he immediately saluted her. The King was particularly affable and kind to his intended daughter-in-law, but the Queen met her with the most repulsive coldness, made but few inquiries, and manifested feelings much opposed in character to those of the King. The Prince of Wales was not only polite and affable to the Princess, but he paid her many compliments, expressed his happiness and confidence in the prospect of an union with her; and his surprise at the fluency with which she conversed in English. At eleven o'clock the Prince of Wales retired, and the Princess was then left under the care of Mrs. Aston.

Lady Jersey, who had been present during the greatest part of the interview, and who had appeared displeased by the attentions which the Prince of Wales had paid to his destined wife, now also retired, determined to avail herself of the period which would elapse prior to a second interview between the illustrious personages, to represent to the Prince, in false and unmerited language, the character of her royal mistress. To Lady Jersey, the Princess of Brunswick had certainly most incautiously and unwarily stated her attachment to a German prince; and Lady Jersey stated that the Princess said, 'she was persuaded that she loved one little finger of that individual far better than she should love the whole person of the Prince of Wales.' The accuracy of this statement, to its full extent, was subsequently denied by the Princess of Brunswick, but still she admitted that she had imprudently referred to a former attachment. Lady Jersey, on the succeeding day, apprised the Prince of Wales of that attachment, assured him that his intended consort had made the above declaration—found fault with her person—ridiculed the coarseness of her manners—predicted that the marriage, if consummated, would be unfortunate, and inveighed against the King for promoting the intended union. A great part of this statement was subsequently admitted by Lady Jersey, and what was not so admitted, was stated by the Princess, on the highest authority, to have taken place.

The effects of the machinations of this female fiend were immediate and baneful, for on the following day, when the Prince of Wales visited St. James', he was distant and reserved in his manners, and manifested, if not a decided aversion from the Princess of Brunswick, at least such a marked alteration in his conduct, that it was observed by all present, and augured little for the happiness of the intended union. Queen Charlotte has been accused of having been the individual who effected, or contributed to effect, such alteration; but the charge is without foundation. The malicious and artful Lady Jersey was the principal, if not the sole cause.

At length the day arrived when the nuptials were to be solemnized, and on the evening of April the 8th, 1795, the marriage took place. It was celebrated at the Royal Chapel, St. James', and the ceremony was splendid and imposing. To enter into a full detail of the whole ceremonial is unnecessary, as it has been fully described in the 'Memoirs of Queen Caroline;' but it may not be deemed irrelevant to show how much the King was interested in the match, which was sufficiently manifested by several minute circumstances connected with the ceremonial of the day. The whole of the royal family having dined together at the Queen's Palace, it was necessary afterwards for them to proceed to St. James' to their respective apartments to dress; and on leaving Buckingham House, the good old King kissed the Princess in the hall, and, in the fulness of his heart, shook the Prince of Wales by the hand till mutual tears started from the eyes of father and son. When the service was performing, and the Archbishop of Canterbury asked, 'Who gives the bride in marriage?' the King instantly and eagerly advanced to the Princess, and taking her with both his hands, presented her with expressive marks of satisfaction.

The indifference of the Prince was indeed a chilling contrast with this parental warmth. The bride was unseemingly dejected, and the Prince, at the commencement, bore his compulsory fate with very little grace; he, however, bethought him of 'the sweet little courtesies,' and before the ceremony concluded, assumed the gallantry of a gentleman, and paid the most polite attention to the bride and bridesmaids. This was but the sunshine of ceremony. Only on one occasion did

the King reprove him, and that when the Prince impatiently rose too soon from his kneeling position. The Archbishop of Canterbury paused, when the King rose from his seat, and whispered to the Prince, who kneeled again, and the service concluded.

After the ceremonial, their Majesties held a drawing-room, which was numerously and brilliantly attended; and on its close, the whole of the royal family returned to the Queen's palace to sup quite in a domestic style, and the newly-married pair retired to Carlton House at midnight.

The celebration of this splendid ceremony was hailed by all ranks and orders of people with the utmost enthusiasm. The thundering expressions of delight by the cannon in the Park and at the Tower were answered by the acclamations of the populace, the ringing of bells, by the display of flags, the flashing of a million tapers, fantastically shining in all shapes and dimensions, and illuminating the whole of the metropolis. The sympathetic feeling extended itself, with the rapidity of lightning, to the remotest parts of the empire, and produced the most enthusiastic effusions of loyalty and joy.

From these public demonstrations of happiness, we turn to private ones of a very different character. We would gladly forbear to touch any further on the fate of the most ill-used of the Brunswick race, and with one exception, Matilda of Denmark, the most unhappy; but we dare not avoid the subject, although now to dwell upon it would excite feelings which may be let sleep without the sacrifice of any paramount duty.

It is very probable that the Princess of Wales would not, under any circumstances, have made her husband a fit member of the marriage state. To supply that absent grace to his character, she must have reclaimed him; and the wife who would reclaim a libertine must begin by awakening his affections. But the affections of the Prince of Wales! where were they? of what nature? by what engaged, or by whom? His passions were known, alas! to be far otherwise excited. His pity might have been touched; but, if Caroline of Brunswick herself could feel that sentiment, she disdained to sue for it.

If Lady Jersey had not, with a perfidy only equalled by her hardihood, stepped forward to prevent the possibility of happi-

ness to the illustrious individuals, although they might not ever be models of conjugal attachment, yet it is more than probable that at least in comparative peace and harmony the Prince and Princess of Wales would have passed their days. It is, indeed, admitted that the Princess was not in a state of mind most favourable to marriage; and it is not less certain that the feelings and situation of the Prince were not more adapted to his projected union; but just in the same proportion as they were mutually unprepared and unfitted, so was that malice, which, by treachery and by falsehood, conspired to render the happiness consequent on that union not merely problematical, but impossible.

To that period, and to such conduct, then, may be traced the subsequent dissatisfaction and misery which resulted from this marriage, and which tended to involve the parties, the royal family, and the nation, in feuds which have not yet wholly subsided, and which have been attended with evils which will ever remain as blots on the pages of English history, and as rallying points for party spleen and political rancour.

Let it, however, be remembered, that to the imprudence, the unjustifiable ingenuousness, and the love of independence of the Princess, may be partially attributed the evils which ensued; since to Lady Jersey, who was to her a stranger, a foreigner, and an inferior, she should not have betrayed feelings which she ought to have concealed from every one; and thus roused into action the dormant evil passions and principles of that celebrated traducer.

Let us, however, follow the injured female to the home of her splendid misery. Her reception in her husband's house was a stain to manhood: a fashionable strumpet usurped the apartments of the Princess—her rights, the honours which were due to her—every thing but the name she bore, and the bonds which galled and disgraced her. The master of the mansion felt not his own dignity insulted, when the half drunken menials made their royal mistress the subject of their gross ribaldry or spiteful abuse. She complained to her parent, her letters were intercepted and the seals violated. The offence of her misery was unmercifully punished. She

became a wanderer over the earth—she sought, after many years, a home in England—the birth-place and once the expected kingdom of her only child. Unsated malice, vengeance, perjury and persecution followed her—she grappled with—strangled them—and bravely perished.

We are aware that in the foregoing passage, we have, as it were, been anticipating the march of our history, and in a few lines have embraced the leading points of the melancholy fate of Caroline of Brunswick. But the whole picture, with all its dark and gloomy shades, presented itself at once to our view; we have given a faint transcript, but the original, with all its horrors, will be remembered as long as England fills a place in the nations of the world.

We have previously shewn that the Princess of Brunswick was not selected by the Prince of Wales, but by his father for him, and that the King refused to recommend the payment of the debts of his son, unless he consented to be married to the Princess of Brunswick. Yet he did consent, and having consented, he should have felt bound by the arrangement, and it may with propriety be asked, what should have been the conduct of each of the distinguished personages under such circumstances? As a woman and a wife, the Princess should have been courteous, kind, respectful, attentive, and submissive. She should not have expected that ardour of affection, and that care and assiduous attention, which she would have had a right to expect, if the Prince had professed to love her, and if she had loved the Prince. Her rank, her character, her accomplishments, her family, her relationship to the reigning monarch and to the heir apparent, ought, however, to have obtained for her the public and private respect, confidence, and society of the Prince. These, however, she did not obtain, for others, far less deserving, studied to supplant her, and they succeeded.

As to the Prince, his situation was even more peculiar. He consummated a marriage without sufficiently reflecting on the consequences. He forgot that Lady Jersey and Mrs. Fitzherbert must be wholly relinquished for a Princess whom he did not love, though he had made her his bride. But he speedily discovered his error, and that was the moment of

difficulty. Every artifice that female jealousy could invent was set in motion to ruin the Princess in the eyes of her husband, and every day added to the aversion which he felt for her.

That the Prince soon testified a disposition to retract his promises, was evident to all who had the opportunity of witnessing the cabals of Carlton House; and the ascendancy which Lady Jersey held over his actions soon involved him in the most perplexing embarrassments. That he did not feel the slightest delicacy for the situation in which he was placed as a married man, was alleged by the Princess herself, who declared, that George III. had disclosed to her, that the late Duke of Gloucester, in a conversation, positively stated that an arrangement was made with Lord Carlisle to give up Lady Jersey to the Prince; that this was agreed to at Rochester, when Lady Jersey first set out to meet the Princess of Wales, and that there was an understanding that she should always be the object of his affections: this was the statement of the Princess, but the Duke of Gloucester is dead, and the direct method of ascertaining its accuracy cannot, therefore, be resorted to. But his son survives him, and to him applications have been made. He has stated, that the full and perfect conviction in his Royal Highness' mind is, that his father never was party to such a conversation. But the conviction of his mind only amounts to an opinion, however well founded; and an opinion cannot be opposed to a direct and positive declaration. If that declaration were *untrue*, then the moral weight of all her late Majesty's declarations would be destroyed; but, before her testimony should be wholly rejected, it would be absolutely necessary to prove that she was not worthy of credit. That the conversation did take place ought not, therefore, to be denied, even if it should be questioned. And it should not be forgotten, that it is not only not impossible, but that it is not even improbable that it did occur, and that such arrangement was made; because every subsequent fact in the history of the Prince and Princess of Wales, for the next few years, demonstrates the connexion which subsisted between the former and Lady Jersey.

If this arrangement really did take place, then the subse-

quent conduct of Lady Jersey can be more easily accounted for, and her familiarity with the Prince of Wales appears yet more objectionable and improper. If it did not take place, then how unaccountable is the conduct of Lady Jersey in venturing to step forward and intrude on the ears of a prince, falsehoods which would tend to create permanent distrust and want of affection on the part of the Prince for his consort, when by such result Lady Jersey could not expect to derive any advantage. The inference, therefore, must be this, that the arrangement referred to *was made*; and that the interference of Lady Jersey was as interested and sordid as it was malicious.

The marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales had not occurred many days, when the latter was informed, that Lady Jersey had been on terms of intimacy with the Prince—that she had endeavoured to poison his mind against her, by false and injurious statements—and ‘that Lady Jersey was the real wife, and the Princess of Wales only the nominal one.’ Every day demonstrated to her that such information was correct, and she avowed to the Prince the dislike she entertained to her ladyship. That avowal he received with considerable displeasure, and professed for the individual the most sincere friendship. But a few words of mutual explanation at that time reconciled the difference.

At length, the conduct of Lady Jersey became more marked—she did not conceal her aversion from the Princess—she endeavoured as much as possible to obtain the private society of the Prince—and discord and misery appeared fast approaching. The first quarrel which occurred between these illustrious individuals took place one day when, on conversing on the subject, she declared her intention of refusing to dine with Lady Jersey when the Prince was not present, and also at any time to converse with her. The Prince insisted on a different line of conduct. He required her to treat Lady Jersey ‘as his friend’—to dine with her at all times—and to converse with her, as with the rest of her ladies. She refused so to act, and in language fervent, and in an animated tone, inveighed against the character of Lady Jersey, and required her dismissal. The Prince, on his part, refused to accede to the

wishes of the Princess, and he left her for some time at Carlton House, angry at her refusal and her conduct. But who can censure the Princess of Wales for refusing the society and the conversation of a woman who was her greatest enemy, and who had endeavoured to effect her misery and ruin?

To the King the Princess now applied—she explained to him the causes of her unhappiness—and the conduct of Lady Jersey—and she represented her situation as a solitary, traduced, and miserable woman, aggravated especially by her delicate situation. The King interfered—effected a reconciliation—and prevailed on the Prince to give up Lady Jersey, and direct that she should no more come into waiting. Part of that engagement was fulfilled; but to Lady Jersey the Prince was too much attached wholly to abandon her. The marriage-bed, which had been forsaken during the absence of the Prince, was now, however, left no longer; and hopes were cherished by the King, that happiness might be restored.

On receiving the communication of their mutual unhappiness, the King was much concerned, and evinced his grief by conduct the most prompt and energetic, yet kind and affectionate. In addition to these troubles, he had been, and continued to be, greatly harassed by the question of the Prince of Wales' debts, which had been brought before Parliament; and this proceeding had given great uneasiness to the mind of the Princess. Scarcely had the marriage been consummated, when the subject was agitated throughout the country, and the union was publicly designated as 'unwise, impolitic, absurd, and ruinous.' The character of her husband she saw aspersed in the public journals, and his friends and associates designated by epithets, as wounding to her pride as they were unnecessary and unkind.

As one of the conditions of the Prince's marriage was, that he should be exonerated from the pecuniary embarrassments under which he laboured, a message from the King was delivered to both Houses of Parliament on account of the debts of the Prince of Wales, on the 27th of April. The message stated the reliance of his Majesty upon their generosity for enabling him to settle an establishment upon the Prince and his august bride, suited to their rank and dignity,—

that the benefit of any settlement now to be made could not be effectually secured to the Prince, till he was relieved from his present incumbrance to a large amount,—but, that his Majesty did not propose to his Parliament any other means of providing for this object, than the application of a part of the income which might be settled on the Prince, and the appropriation, for a certain time, of the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall, declaring his readiness to concur in any plan for establishing a regular arrangement in the future expenditure of the Prince, and of guarding against the possibility of his being again involved.

As this communication was made at a season of great national embarrassment, and when the discontents of the people ran high, we cannot be surprised that it should have excited a considerable sensation among some of the independent members of the House of Commons. After the reading of his Majesty's message, Mr. Pitt moved for a committee to consider it that day se'nnight, upon which Colonel Stanley (member for Lancashire) moved for reading the address to the House on the 24th of May, 1787. This related to the former discharge of the Prince's incumbrances, and being read, Mr. Stanley observed, that the House had already liberally paid the debts of the Prince; and he wished for a call of the House, that the attendance upon an affair of so much importance might be as full as possible. This was opposed by Mr. Pitt, who stated that it was not his Majesty's intention to require a specific sum for the discharge of the principal debts, but to set apart a certain portion of that income which might be granted by the liberality of Parliament, to their gradual discharge. An establishment for the Prince of Wales, he said, had long been a matter of general expectation. In a provision to be made for supporting the dignity and splendour of the heir-apparent, it was certainly necessary to free his affairs of all clogs and embarrassments. Comparing the grants made to the grandfather of his Royal Highness, at a time when the scale of expense was infinitely less, the sum to be now proposed was comparatively small. Mr. Pitt then enlarged upon the necessity of supporting the dignity and splendour of every branch of the royal family; and

argued, that, on a subject of such general obviousness, there was no necessity for a call of the House.

While the public attention was called to this interesting question by the discussions in parliament, a variety of publications issued from the press, teeming with the most virulent abuse of the Prince of Wales. Had the administration of the day been half so bitterly reviled, or had there been any *Scarletts* existing at that time, the files of the Court of King's Bench would have been crowded with official informations of the attorney-general to prosecute the offenders; but the libels against the Prince of Wales were passed over without notice. The season, too, was favourable to their propagation. The criminal excesses of the French revolution were recent in the recollection of every one, and it was circulated with industry, and believed with avidity, that the mischiefs which had fallen on royalty in that country had been produced by the prodigality of the French princes. There was, indeed, some foundation for this accusation; and as it was one that every one could understand and apply, it was widely spread, and found almost universal acceptance. It is likewise to be taken into consideration, that at this period there were many disaffected persons in the kingdom, who wished for an alteration in the government. These persons were not disaffected to the Prince personally, but they were disinclined to royalty generally: as the want of prudence imputed to the Prince furnished them with an opportunity of attacking the throne by a side wind, they eagerly seized it; and, if we reckon the number of publications that appeared on the subject, it cannot be questioned that they made the utmost possible use of the occasion. These writers certainly had a considerable influence on the public mind, and as the ostensible object of their publications was to show, that the way best calculated for the preservation of the hereditary monarchy, was to prevent it from being oppressive to the people, though their real motive was very different, it was difficult to answer them in a way to meet the popular judgment.

The further consideration of the Prince of Wales' debts was resumed in the House of Commons on the 14th of May, when Mr. Hussey proposed that the reports of the commis-

sioners on the state of the crown-lands should be referred to the present committee. He stated that, by the first of Anne, cap. 7, this subject, and that of provision for the royal family, were closely connected. These lands, he said, had never yet produced 6000*l.* a year, though they might be improved to the annual value of 400,000*l.* The motion was, however, objected to, as not proper in the present stage of the proceeding, and irrelevant to the subject; it was accordingly negatived,—and the House proceeded to take into consideration the message from his Majesty relative to the establishment of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the liquidation of the debts of the former.

After an animated exordium, which few men were more capable of making on some occasions than Mr. Pitt, in which the immediate interest of the country, in supporting the dignity and splendour of the royal family, was strongly insisted upon by him, the minister proceeded to state the necessity of an additional establishment on account of the marriage of the Prince, and a jointure for her Royal Highness. These were the only objects, Mr. Pitt said, to which he wished, at that time, to direct the attention of the committee. The present income of the Prince of Wales was 60,000*l.*, exclusive of the duchy of Cornwall, which was about 15,000*l.* per annum. Fifty years ago, his grandfather, then Prince of Wales, possessed a net income of 100,000*l.* per annum, in addition to the duchy of Cornwall. Eighty years ago, his great grandfather, then Prince of Wales, had 100,000*l.*, without that duchy. From a review of those establishments, Mr. Pitt said, the House would see that his present Royal Highness ought to have a considerable addition, even if he were not incumbered with debt. The difference of expense, between the former period and the present time, amounted, he thought, to at least one-fourth of the whole income. He therefore proposed, that the income of his Royal Highness should be 125,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the duchy of Cornwall. This was no more, he thought, than the committee would be disposed to allow to the Prince on the event of a marriage which they approved and rejoiced in. Here, he said, he rested the present question: with regard to regulations

to be made hereafter, he should state the preparations for the marriage at 27,000*l.* or 28,000*l.* for jewels and plate, and 26,000*l.* for furnishing Carlton House. The jointure of the Princess to be 50,000*l.* per annum. The debts of his Royal Highness, which were for future consideration, he stated at nearly 630,000*l.*, up to the last quarter; besides which, there were some debts in which he was security for the Dukes of York and Clarence; but from their meritorious exertions, such debts were in such a train of liquidation, and a course of punctual discharge, that there was no fear of their becoming burdensome to the public. Mr. Pitt said, he wished to take the sense of the house on the best mode of freeing his Royal Highness from his incumbrances; and was convinced that, before the house should take any step for their liquidation, they ought to be clearly stated for accurate investigation. For this purpose he wished to know whether the house would prefer a secret committee, which was the most expeditious mode, or whether they would leave the whole to be settled under legislative provisions. Whatever mode was adopted, it was necessary that regard should be had to a provision against contracting debts in future; and it was, he thought, necessary that parliament should mark the sense they entertained of the manner in which His Royal Highness had incurred his present embarrassments; and in that view, the liquidation of the debt might properly be a tax on the affluence of the Prince. He should, therefore, in a future stage of this proceeding, propose certain provisions for liquidating the debts out of the duchy of Cornwall, and the other income of his Royal Highness, certain parts of which should be vested in commissioners, to discharge the debt and interest at four per cent., except such as bore legal interest at five. For this purpose, he proposed 25,000*l.* a year should be set apart, which would discharge the debt in about twenty-seven years. In the case of the demise of the Prince of Wales within that time, 25,000*l.* would be charged annually on that succession; but in the event of the demise of the crown, and of his Royal Highness, within that time, the burden must fall on the consolidated fund. There were, he said, two heads to be attended to in the business under consideration—the punctual payment of the debt already contracted

—and that no further debts should be incurred. For this purpose, no arrears should, on any pretence, go beyond the quarter; that debts thus claimed should be punctually paid, and no other. Mr. Pitt further proposed to invest Carlton House in the crown for ever, that the furniture should be considered as a heir-loom, and that all suits for the recovery of debts from his Royal Highness should lie against his officers. Mr. Pitt concluded with moving that the revenue of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales should be increased to 125,000*l.* per annum.

Mr. (now Earl) Grey, and other members, opposed the motion on the popular grounds, that, as the community at large were suffering great privations, on account of a burdensome and expensive war, the Prince of Wales, having incurred debts to an enormous amount, ought not at such a period to have recourse to the public purse for assistance, but make such a reduction in his expenses as would enable him to discharge the claims of his creditors. However exalted his rank, he ought, they said, to endeavour to come to a composition with his creditors, which it was probable they would gladly accept; and that, until he had satisfied their demands, until the calls of strict justice were completely answered, he should limit his expenses, and abstain from the splendour of a court. Mr. Grey moved an amendment to Mr. Pitt's proposition, that the Prince of Wales should only have an augmentation to his income of 40,000*l.* per annum, instead of the sum of 65,000*l.* which the minister's proposition recommended.

Mr. Fox, in an admirable speech, took a luminous view of the question. He admitted, he said, the necessity of supporting the splendour of the crown, as an essential part of the constitution; but he did not understand calling it, as it had been called, the centre of the constitution. He did not regard the establishment of former Princes of Wales as the most creditable part of the history of the house of Brunswick. The establishment of George II., when Prince of Wales, had been a mere matter of party; still more so was that of his son, Frederick Prince of Wales. The establishment of the latter had been 60,000*l.* when he happened to differ from his Majesty's ministers, and 100,000*l.* when he agreed with them

Mr. Fox delicately adverted to the suspicious circumstances in which such a transaction placed that Prince*, and wished the house to avoid such a conduct as might expose the Prince of Wales to similar suspicions. He blamed the scantiness of the former income granted to his Royal Highness, and exculpated himself for having concurred in it, on the ground of its having been an experiment; and that great deference was due to his Majesty, who gave 50,000*l.* out of the civil list. A few years afterwards, other ministers advised his Majesty to apply to parliament to exonerate the civil list from this allowance. In 1787, provision was made by parliament for paying the debts of his Royal Highness, and 10,000*l.* a year was added to his income. This he thought insufficient, but could not oppose it, after both his Majesty and the Prince had declared that it was sufficient. The declaration of his Royal Highness, that he would not again apply to parliament, had greatly surprised him: it was, however, a promise which, in honour, he thought him obliged to keep. It was, however, the opinion of ministers, that 60,000*l.* a year, in addition to the duchy of Cornwall, was sufficient for reinstating the Prince in all his splendour. Upon what principle then did they now say that 125,000*l.* a year was necessary? This, he thought, could not arise from his marriage—a circumstance which, whatever changes it made in the lower classes, very little altered the expenses of those in superior life. Howthen could those who said, in 1787, that 73,000*l.* a year was sufficient, say that 138,000*l.* must be necessary now? It seemed that, like his grandfather, ministers measured the extent of his allowance by the degree of approbation he bestowed upon their measures. He was not actuated by the same motives, and therefore he should vote for the larger sum, provided that no similar application should be made to parliament in future. Mr. Fox then proceeded to vindicate the character of the Prince of Wales from some of the imputations that had been thrown out against it by preceding speakers. Was the Prince of Wales, he asked, the

* A particular account of the intrigues here alluded to, and certainly not very favourable to the character of Frederick Prince of Wales, or to the purity of his political advisers, is to be found in the Memoirs of Bubb Doddington, Lord Melcombe, who, it is well known, entered as largely as any man into the cabals of his day.

first example the house would select for reform, or, in some sort, for punishment? It would ill become him to be very pointed in his disapprobation of imprudent expenses in others; but he would say to Westminster, to the public at large, 'if you complain of increased habits of expense, begin the reformation by reforming yourselves.' Considering the influence allowed to the crown, was it seemly to act harshly and austere towards a prince who had no such influence? Something on this occasion might, he thought, have been spared out of the civil list. Queen Anne, from a civil list of 600,000*l.*, gave 100,000*l.* towards the support of the war. George I., out of 700,000*l.* a year, gave 100,000*l.* for the establishment of his heirs; and George II. the same sum. In the American war, parliament paid a large debt for the civil list, and added to it 100,000*l.* a year. The sum for the privy purse had been gradually increased from 36,000*l.* to 60,000*l.* a year. Why should not the establishment of the Prince be proportionably increased? After the promise given in 1787, and that no engagement appeared on the part of his Royal Highness against future claims of the same nature, he was averse from noticing the debts. On account merely of the Princess of Wales, for whom the house, by its addresses, was pledged to make a suitable provision, would he assent to relieving the Prince from his embarrassments, but not without a sinking fund for liquidating the debts within a reasonable time. The small sum proposed by the minister for liquidating his debts, the payment of which would take twenty-seven years, Mr. Fox thought only exposed the Prince to injurious reflections on the part of the public: relinquishing his state for the present would leave a sum for the payment of his debts in a short time, at the end of which the public would gain a beloved and respected Prince of Wales, and his future years must be prosperous indeed, if he counted the years of his probation as the least happy of his life.

For this purpose, Mr. Fox wished the Prince of Wales to give up 65,000*l.* a year, with the income of the duchy of Cornwall, for the discharge of his debts. The sale of the duchy, he said, would effect this much sooner, and without expense to the public. He had been informed that it would sell for

800,000*l.*, but he would state it at 600,000*l.*, and the Prince's life interest in it at 300,000*l.* There would then only remain about 300,000*l.* of debt, which the fund he had mentioned would pay off in three or four years. Mr. Fox strongly recommended precautions for the prevention of future debts, provided they were applied to all future kings and princes; but thought there were inconveniences in making the officers of the Prince responsible for his debts, which could not be obviated.

After some further observations of Mr. Fox, on the propriety of his Majesty coming forward on such an occasion, and the right that the Prince had to the arrears of the duchy of Cornwall during his minority, and which had been applied by successive ministers in aid of the civil list, the house proceeded to divide upon Mr. Grey's amendment, when the numbers for it were 99, against it 260. On the division for repairing Carlton House, there were for it 248, against it 99. For the expense of the royal marriage 241, against it 100.

The debates in the House of Commons excited a corresponding sensation out of doors, which was artfully kept alive by inflammatory publications, and newspaper paragraphs, tending to degrade the Prince of Wales in the estimation of the public. In this state of the affair, Mr. Anstruther, then attorney-general to the Prince, and afterwards chief justice of the supreme court at Calcutta, was authorized to make the following communication to the House of Commons, in the name of the Prince of Wales.

‘That his Royal Highness was desirous to acquiesce in whatever might be the sentiments of the house, both in respect to the future regulation of his expenditure, and the appropriation of any part of the income they might think fit to grant him, for the discharge of his debt; his wish, on the present occasion, was entirely to consult the wisdom of parliament. He was perfectly disposed to acquiesce in whatever abatement of splendour they might judge to be necessary, from a view of his situation; and desired to have nothing but what the country might cordially be induced to think he ought to have. In fine, that his Royal Highness left all matters relative to the regulation of his establishment, and the payment of his debts, to the

wisdom and discretion of parliament, with the assurance that whatever measures they might adopt would meet with his hearty concurrence.'

Mr. Pitt, upon this occasion, congratulated the house upon the constitutional sentiments which his Royal Highness had expressed; and said, he observed with pleasure that a parliament which had never failed in any expression of loyalty to their sovereign, or attachment to his family—which had never been wanting in discovering a proper spirit of liberality, when the occasion called for it—had no less in the present instance shewn a degree of jealousy, care, and circumspection, when a demand was made upon the pockets of their constituents, attended with some circumstances which they could not altogether approve. He had no less satisfaction, he said, in observing that the illustrious personage himself was impressed with a just sense of that line of conduct which regard to his character and situation required him to pursue; and he trusted that the house had that day received an earnest of the future disposition of his Royal Highness, and of that regard to the welfare of the people which would distinguish him in the exalted situation to which he might one day be called. Under that impression, he hoped there would be little difference of opinion as to the proposition which he should submit to the house. The instruction he meant to move went precisely to the two objects which his honourable and learned friend (Mr. Anstruther) had referred to, in the communication from his Royal Highness: the regulation of the expenditure of his household, and the appropriation of part of the income for the discharge of his debts. It was certainly satisfactory, Mr. Pitt said, for the house to know that his Royal Highness was perfectly disposed to concur in whatever arrangements the wisdom of parliament might adopt in respect to those two objects. He hoped that by this communication every difficulty would be considerably lessened, though they might not, perhaps, be entirely removed; as some members, however, who were disposed to support the dignity and credit of the Prince of Wales, by a proper establishment, had expressed their opinion that no notice ought to be taken of the debts at all. The question, he would remark, at present, was not what part of the income

should be appropriated to the payment of the debt, nor did the instruction he meant to propose go so much as to narrow even the largest sum that had been suggested for that purpose. The only question was, whether the aid of parliament ought to be given to his Royal Highness, by adopting legislative regulations for the discharge of debts, which, it was admitted on all hands, ought never to have been contracted. Without any retrospect to the past, over which Mr. Pitt said he wished to draw a veil, he appealed to the fair and candid feelings of the House, whether they could refuse to adopt a measure so necessary for the character and credit of his Royal Highness, so infinitely connected with his personal comfort and the splendour of his rank? Could they refuse to concur with his Royal Highness in appropriating a large part out of the income allotted him, in order to relieve him from the embarrassment of debt? The business appeared to him to rest upon so plain a proposition, and to be in itself so self-evident, that, reserving all particular details for future discussion, he trusted that what he had now to propose would meet the almost unanimous concurrence of the House. Mr. Pitt concluded with moving an instruction to the committee, that another committee should be appointed to bring in the bill relative to a general regulation of his Royal Highness' expenditure, and the appropriation of part of his income to the discharge of his debts.

The substance of the arguments of those who opposed Mr. Pitt's motion, may be gathered from the speech of Mr. Duncombe (one of the members for York), who stated that he was one of those who, on a former day, had voted for the smaller augmentation of the Prince's income. 'At a time,' said this gentleman, 'when the comforts and conveniences of life are wanting to the middling classes of society, when the poor are scarcely supplied with even common necessities, and when the prospect of a dearth* becomes every day more alarming, I cannot listen to the idle claims of splendour and magnificence; I trust that at such a season the feelings of his Royal Highness will dispose him rather to sympathize with the distress of

* The harvest of 1795 was at this period very unpromising, and afterwards turned out extremely unfavourable.

the lower orders, and to sacrifice something for their relief, than to form selfish and extravagant pretensions. There is another consideration which deserves to be attended to. In these distempered times, let us beware how, by an unnecessary or wanton profusion of the public money, we furnish the favourers of wild and dangerous innovations with a colour and plausibility for their arguments. As a friend to the hereditary monarchy, as an adherent to the family on the throne, I feel myself called upon to resist the motion. Let us recollect that there are other branches of the royal family. If, after the assurance we have received, we again consent to pay the debts of his Royal Highness, we shall establish a precedent, of which we cannot tell to what purpose it may be applied, or to what extent it may be carried. I do not mean to say that the debts ought not to be paid, but I look to other resources for that purpose. I look first to the justice of his Royal Highness to make provision for the payment of those debts that shall be proved to be just: many of them, I apprehend, do not come under that description. I look to his future economy in the regulation of his household; and lastly, I look to the assistance he may derive from the well known munificence of his royal father. As the idea of temporary retirement has been suggested, I have only to remark, that from such a retirement his Royal Highness might reap great advantage in settling his affairs, and be again enabled to emerge with fresh splendour. Retirement, it has been remarked, is the nurse of reflection; by its influence his Royal Highness might be enabled to confirm those resolutions which he has expressed in his communication to the House, and to return again into public life fortified against future error, and qualified for the important duties of that high station which he may one day be called to fill.'

The allusion to assistance that might be expected from the King, was repeated by Mr. Curwen and other members, and commented on by Mr. Dundas, who said, he was surprised at one resource which had been pointed out by some honourable gentlemen, in the affection and benevolence of his royal father. (*A cry of hear, hear, pervaded the House.*) That cry, Mr. Dundas said, he was confident, could only proceed

from a few voices, and by no means discovered the general feeling of the House on the subject. They had repeatedly had occasion to examine the situation of his Majesty with respect to the civil list, particularly on occasion of granting establishments to the Duke of Clarence, and to the Duke of York on his marriage. They might recollect, that on the arrangement formerly made with respect to the debts of his Royal Highness, part of that provision arose out of the liberality of his Majesty. The civil list was indeed large, but was wholly appropriated to particular services, except the sum allotted for his Majesty's privy purse. The idea of such a resource arose out of the miserable feeling which he was surprised that any gentleman could entertain. He knew not (and his means of information were as good as those of any other member) of the existence of any such sum, as that which had been referred to. Besides, he would ask, with that numerous family with which his Majesty was blessed, were there no other objects who claimed his royal munificence and attention? The Prince of Wales was the last who might be supposed to have such a claim; he, from the situation in which he stood, was the peculiar care of the public. Allusion might be made to the revenues which his Majesty derived from the electorate of Hanover. But had his Majesty no state to support in that quarter? Was he to rob his Hanoverian subjects in order to pay debts contracted in this country by the heir apparent to the British crown? The appeal that had been made on this subject he could consider as neither fair nor candid, and, as such, he should dismiss it without further observation.

These remarks of Mr. Dundas drew a most animated speech from Mr. Fox. That great statesman enlarged, in the most eloquent terms, upon the glorious opportunity afforded in the present instance for the display of royal munificence, and lamented that his Majesty had not been advised to lead the way upon this occasion. He did not mean to say that the whole 600,000*l.* should be paid by his Majesty; but he would say, because he felt, that it was a little unseemly, at a time of such general calamity, his Majesty should be the only person in the kingdom who did not contribute a single farthing towards the discharge of the incumbrances of the Prince of Wales.

This, he could not help repeating, was unseemly. He hoped his Majesty would be better advised upon this subject. A glorious opportunity offered itself for the display of royal munificence; and a handsome conduct upon such an occasion as this would do even more for the constitution than the most vigorous exertion of the arm of power. It was with this view he had contended, and sorry he was he had contended unsuccessfully, against the additional 100,000*l.* a year to the income of his Majesty himself, during the continuance of the American war; because, when all the subjects of his Majesty felt so much during that war, he thought that his Majesty would do well to show them a lesson of frugality and economy. If this principle were correct, and the application of it just at that time, how much more so was it now, when the question is—‘how many burdens are to be laid upon the public to relieve the Prince of Wales from debt?’ He would say again, it was unfortunate that some person had not advised his Majesty to lead the way upon this occasion, to shew the public an example of liberality, and to convince them that he felt, himself, the necessity there was for indulging a generous temper. Happy should he be, when this subject should come to be discussed, if the house, by a gracious communication, should be given to understand that the illustrious personage to whom he alluded intended to take some share in the contingent burden which might be felt.

On the 5th of June, Mr. Pitt presented to the House of Commons an account of the proceeds of the duchy of Cornwall, during the minority of the Prince of Wales, an abstract of the debts which his Royal Highness had incurred, and an account of the application of 25,000*l.* for finishing Carlton House. From these documents it appeared that the several sums paid from the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall during the minority of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales amounted to 233,764*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.*

	£.	s.	d.
Debts on various securities, and bearing interest	500,571	19	1
Amount of tradesmen's bills unpaid	86,745	0	0
Tradesmen's bills, and arrears of establishment,			
from October 10, 1794, to April 5, 1795	52,573	5	3
	£639,890	4	4

Mr. Pitt then stated, that it was his intention to move in the committee, that 65,000*l.*, with the income of the duchy of Cornwall, should be set apart for the liquidation of the debts, making an annual sum of 78,000*l.* The burden, he said, could not be thrown upon the civil list, which, in the event of the demise of the Prince, would be charged with the jointure of the Princess. He should therefore move, that the committee have a discretionary power to provide, out of the hereditary revenue of the crown (in case of the demise of his present Majesty) during the life of his Royal Highness, for the payment of his debts; and, in case of the demise of the Prince, to provide out of the consolidated fund for the payment of such sums as should then remain unpaid. He explained, that for several reigns it had been thought proper to commute the hereditary revenue for a civil list. The mode he proposed was at once calculated to give security to the creditors, or, in the event of an accession to the throne, to render his Royal Highness responsible for the payment of his remaining debts.

One of the most eloquent speeches delivered at this interesting period, and which made the deepest impression on the public mind (if we except a speech subsequently delivered by his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence) was that which was delivered by Mr. Sheridan. In the inflammatory publications of the day, Mr. Sheridan had, with peculiar virulence, been accused as one of the evil advisers of the Prince, from whose pernicious counsels the greater part of his embarrassments had flowed; but from this charge Mr. Sheridan vindicated himself so fully, that we cannot help feeling the utmost surprise, on looking over some recent publications, to find that Mr. Sheridan should still continue to be charged with being a prime agent in leading the Prince of Wales into his serious embarrassments. This distinguished orator opened his speech with urging the propriety of ministers having suggested to his Majesty the necessity of his setting an example on the present occasion. Were, he asked, the expenses of the Prince so very unpardonable? His Majesty possessed many great and good qualities; but on the subject of expense, and keeping his promise with the public, would the Prince lose by the

comparison? In this he imputed all the blame to ministers. On his Majesty's accession, the civil list was settled at 800,000*l.* a-year, which was thought so ample, that parliament was assured from the throne that the civil list should not be suffered to run into arrears: since then, debts of the civil list had been paid to an amount, which, at compound interest, would exceed seven millions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, in the early part of his administration, assured the House that no more debt should accrue on the civil list, yet he soon after called upon the House to pay a new debt.

Mr. Sheridan then adverted to the embarrassments felt by the Prince of Wales on account of the narrowness of the income which had been fixed for him, during which his Royal Highness had often done him the honour to consult him, chiefly because his Royal Highness knew his fixed determination to accept no favours; and Mr. Sheridan took that opportunity of declaring that he had never received any presents of great value from the Prince. He had, he said, advised his Royal Highness not to make the promise he made in 1787, from the improbability of its being kept. He had at that time drawn up a plan of retrenchment, which was approved by the Prince, and by his Majesty; and the Prince told him the promise was not to be insisted upon, though to his great surprise he found it inserted in the King's message, which had been seen by his Royal Highness. The Prince wished him to retract it, but this he declined. Ministers had then a check upon the expenditure of his Royal Highness, which they had never enforced: they had never interposed to stop a shameful profusion of money upon Carlton House.

Another plan of retrenchment therefore followed, and the Prince was advised, Mr. Sheridan said, by Lord Thurlow and himself, not to apply again to parliament, and to take no part in politics, but to retire from public life, and apply the greatest part of his income to the liquidation of his debts. Another noble lord, however (Loughborough) having, about this time, obtained the Prince's notice, he, it seems, told his Royal Highness that such advice was too nearly allied to that given to Monsieur Egalité, and clearly pointed out the quarter from which it came. His lordship, though mistaken in his allusion,

had that effect on his Royal Highness that his former resolution was superseded, and the present application made—an application which he extremely condemned, and thought of a nature that tended to shake the very foundation of monarchy in this kingdom, more perhaps than any plan that the most inveterate Jacobin could have pursued.

The monarch, as far as was possible, was rendered unamiable, and the House insulted. The Prince was held up at once to scorn and reprehension, and at last obliged to live in splendid penury, to stand, as it were, in a gilded pillory, and to do penance in an embroidered sheet, proclaimed to the world a wasteful prodigal, unfit to be intrusted with the management of his own affairs. Something, he said, ought to be given by the King. There were debts due to honest tradesmen, to whom no exception could be taken, which ought not to be postponed. There were, on the establishment, gentlemen of honour, whose salaries were fourteen quarters in arrear.

Carlton House being made the property of the public, the public, he thought, ought to pay the expense of rebuilding it. This would reduce the debts to 500,000*l.* The interest of this at five per cent. would be 25,000*l.* In 1777, the privy purse of the King was made 60,000*l.* a-year, and the Queen received 50,000*l.* for her establishment. He should therefore expect 10,000*l.* a-year from the privy purse, and 5000*l.* from the Queen's establishment; for the remaining 10,000*l.* a-year, he would look to places and sinecures, taking them as they fell, which in time would form a fund for paying off even the principal. Mr. Sheridan then proposed an amendment, that nothing should be charged upon the sinking fund, till it should be found that the resources he had indicated were insufficient.—On a division, Mr. Sheridan's amendment was negatived by a majority of 148 to 93.

On the motion of Mr. Pitt, the annual sum of 65,000*l.* was appropriated to the revenue of the Prince, out of the consolidated fund, by a majority of 93 against 68. A conversation then took place, respecting the appropriation of an annual sum out of the revenue of the duchy of Cornwall, towards paying the debts of his Royal Highness, and whether the

consent of the Duke of York was not necessary (which occasioned instructions to the committee for this purpose) during the time that his Majesty, or his Royal Highness, shall be interested in that revenue. The commitment of the bill was opposed by Mr. Whitbread, as containing provisions degrading and disgraceful to the Prince. Mr. Lambton (member for Durham, and who was in the confidence of the Prince) stated, however, that his Royal Highness was perfectly satisfied with its principles, and in general approved its restrictions. Mr. Powys and Mr. Fox thought many points still remained to be discussed, before the subject was sufficiently matured for the decision of the House. What Mr. Fox particularly objected to was, that the income of the Prince would, he feared, be laid under the management and approbation of the minister*. He further objected to considering the furniture of Carlton House as a heir-loom, as unfair to the Prince, and to his creditors. The sale of the duchy of Cornwall was again strongly recommended by several members, particularly by Mr. Sheridan, who opposed the commitment. The House, however, went into a committee, when it was moved, to allow the Prince of Wales 65,000*l.* per annum. Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Whitbread moved an amendment, limiting the sum to 40,000*l.*, which was negatived by a large majority. Another amendment was proposed by Sir W. Young, that the annuity should be paid out of the civil list; but upon the question for taking it out of the consolidated fund, the ayes were 149, noes 16: 27,000*l.* were also granted, on account of the marriage of his Royal Highness, and 27,000*l.* for finishing the repairs of Carlton House.

The arrears of the duchy of Cornwall, during the minority of the Prince of Wales, which had been so frequently adverted to in the preceding debates, were again made the subject of discussion by General Smith, on reading the report. He moved a clause for inquiry into the amount of the revenue during that time, with a view to its being applicable to the

* The Commissioners appointed under this bill for discharging the debts of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, were, the Speaker of the House of Commons for the time being, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Master of the Rolls, the Master of his Majesty's Household, the Accountant-General of the High Court of Chancery, and the Surveyor-General of the Crown Lands.

liquidation of his Royal Highness' debts. The attorney-general admitted that he had been inaccurate on a former night, respecting the tenure of that duchy, which was of a nature so difficult and peculiar, that it was not easy for him to describe it. It was a fund set apart by the legislature for the support of the Prince of Wales, who had very properly been represented as *major de die nativitatis*. The right of the Prince was extremely difficult to ascertain: if it were a fund for his support from his birth, the King, as his guardian, had the disposal of the fund during his minority; and the long period which had since occurred would render any claim on the part of the Prince extremely doubtful. To this was added, by Mr. Pitt, that if any claim existed, it was on the part of the public. The revenue had been applied in aid of the civil list, and as such had been recognized by parliament. If this were a fund for the support of the state and dignity of the Prince, it was certainly intended that the appropriation of this fund should prevent any expense from falling on the civil list, or the public. Who would then have a right to set off against the income any expense incurred on account of the Prince? The expenses of his education had been 80,000*l.*, with an extraordinary expense of 3000*l.* This included the Duke of York: but as the same preceptors would have been necessary for the Prince, this made a trifling addition. In 1783, 60,000*l.* was granted to defray the expenses of his outset; in 1797, his debts were paid to the amount of 219,000*l.* These united made 300,000*l.*, and would have to be deducted from the proceeds of his minority, should they be adjudged to him.

Mr. Fox controverted these arguments, and said, that with respect to the duchy being conceived the only fund necessary for the support of the Prince of Wales, that was far from being the case, since the principality of Wales, and the earldom of Chester, had been granted for the same purpose. Natural feeling, he said, required that the King, like other fathers, should be charged with the education of his son. The public had never given the King the duchy of Cornwall; but the public indeed paid the King's debts, and they allowed the arrears arising out of the duchy of Cornwall to go in part to discharge them; if they had not, the amount of his Majesty's

debts would have been considerably greater : but was it to be asserted that, be they what they might, they would have discharged them ; or that, as a matter of course, they would have given 800,000*l.* with the same facility as 600,000*l.* ? Mr. Fox thought it of the utmost importance to ascertain what was really due to the Prince. The expense of his education, and that of the Duke of York, as appeared by a paper on the table, for a term of years, had been 40,000*l.*, of which 25,000*l.* at most could be charged to the account of the Prince, though at the same time the revenue of the duchy was 75,000*l.* The 60,000*l.* voted in 1783 was not for the Prince, but in aid of the civil list ; and of this the Prince did not receive more than 20,000*l.* On a fair calculation, it would be found that his Royal Highness had not received more than 100,000*l.* above his regular income ; and the revenue of the duchy, during his minority, with interest, amounted to 500,000*l.* On a division, there appeared for the motion 40, against it 97.

A bill was then brought in by Sir W. Pulteney, for preventing any future Princes of Wales from incurring debts, and passed ; and the jointure of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales was fixed at 50,000*l.*

The discussions in the lower house on this interesting subject were followed by a series of debates in the House of Peers, equally animated, and, from the peculiar situation of some of the speakers, perhaps still more interesting to the public. On the first day's debate, the question of the Prince's right to the proceeds of the duchy of Cornwall was warmly agitated ; and it was strenuously contended by them that he was entitled to them from the day of his birth.

But the debate of most interest was that which occurred on the 24th of June, on the second reading of the bill, when a message was delivered by Lord Cholmondely from the Prince, similar to the former message delivered by Mr. Anstruther in the House of Commons, stating his Royal Highness' readiness to acquiesce in whatever measures the wisdom of parliament might think proper to recommend. The Duke of Clarence particularly distinguished himself on this day's debate ; and, in a speech, delivered under the evident impression of strong

personal feeling, took a perspicuous view of the whole question.

His Royal Highness commenced his speech with declaring, that having on a former occasion stated that he should act in this business without any regard to party, he now rose to deliver his sentiments to the house, before an opportunity had been afforded to mingle personal feelings in the discussion. Whatever were his sentiments with respect to the bill—whether he was satisfied with the whole, or only with parts of it—he should certainly vote that it might pass. His Royal Highness next made some observations on the title of the bill, and said he should principally confine his remarks on it to that which related to the provision to be made for the payment of his Royal Highness' creditors. There were some parts of the bill which, he confessed, met with his entire approbation. It naturally and properly, his Royal Highness said, became an object to grant a suitable establishment to the Prince, on account of his marriage. In granting this establishment, it might have been supposed that the Prince had now come to an age, at which he was fully capable of acting for himself, and would, of his own accord, have been disposed to take measures to free himself from any incumbrances which he might have contracted. But, instead of this—instead of allowing him the merit and taking measures of his own accord, to pay his creditors, the authors of the bill had taken the popularity of such a step out of his hands. The other provision, which made the different officers of his Royal Highness' household responsible for the expenses incurred under their several departments, he highly approved. He conceived it to be a measure extremely necessary for the dignity and comfort of every Prince of Wales. A Prince of Wales, his Royal Highness observed, by a particular law, became of age at eighteen, while every other subject was not of age till twenty-one. A young man at that age, when the passions were at their height, and in his situation, might be led into expenses beyond his income, and which, perhaps, might border on extravagance; but such a circumstance he could not consider as a serious reflection on a young man of eighteen.

His Royal Highness next remarked, that those who had been most concerned in bringing forward the business, instead of acting as they ought, had so managed as to take away all popularity from the Prince, in order to centre it in themselves. The bill to prevent future Princes of Wales from contracting debt, instead of going hand in hand with the present bill, the Duke of Clarence said, had been so brought in as to be attended with a marked personality to his Royal Highness. Though he should not betray anything that passed in private conversation, yet he could not help making some remarks on the manner in which the business had been introduced into parliament. It was a matter, his Royal Highness said, of public notoriety, that when the Prince of Wales' marriage was agreed upon, there was a stipulation that he should, in the event of that union, be exonerated from his debts. What could his Royal Highness understand by this stipulation, but that measures should be taken for the immediate exoneration of those debts—not, as by the provisions of the present bill, that they should be left hanging over for the space of nine years and a half, and, perhaps, even a longer period. The authors of the bill had stated, that the credit and stability of the throne depended upon the support of the independence and dignity of every branch of the royal family, particularly of the Prince of Wales. Was this the method they had taken as best calculated to support that dignity, and that independence? His Royal Highness had, indeed, expressed his acquiescence in whatever measures the wisdom of parliament might think proper to recommend; but what was the situation in which he was placed? The bill was, in one point of view, a public bill, as was every bill which related to any branch of the royal family; but it was more strictly a private bill, as nothing could be done without the consent of the Prince. Advantage then had been taken of the difficulties in which he was involved, in order to procure from him this consent. He was forced to express his acquiescence, in order that something might be done. He was in the situation of a man, who, if he cannot get a haunch of venison, will rather take any other haunch than go without.

The Duke of Clarence next alluded to the vast number of pamphlets which had been published, in order to influence the

minds of the good and generous people of England against his royal brother. He knew persons in another place, he said, who possessed great powers of eloquence, and an abundant choice of animated expressions. These persons had exerted their powers in order to support the measure of granting a subsidy of 200,000*l.* a-year to the King of Sardinia, a sum of 1,200,000*l.* to the King of Prussia, and lately the loan of 4,600,000*l.* to the Emperor of Austria. But though on these occasions they displayed all their stores of animated language, yet when they brought forward the situation of the Prince of Wales, they prefaced what they had to propose with the expressions—‘an unpleasant task—an arduous undertaking—the distresses of the people in consequence of the war—the regret of laying additional burdens on the public—’ yet he must remark, that, if they had adopted with respect to his royal brother, a language something more favourable, as to the impression it was calculated to give of his conduct to the country, they would not have had a vote less to the present bill.

His Royal Highness next touched on the situation of the Princess of Wales, *a lovely and amiable woman*, torn from her family, for though her mother was the King’s sister, she might still be said to be torn from her family by being removed from all her early connexions; what must be her feelings from such circumstances attendant on her reception in a country, where she had a right to expect every thing befitting her high rank, and the exalted station to which she was called? As a friend to the Prince he, however, would not oppose the passing of the present bill, for he was convinced that the sooner it passed, the sooner would its absurdity and malignity appear. If, as had been stated, the arrears of the duchy of Cornwall were due to the Prince during the period of his minority, he hoped that question would be quickly brought forward, and he trusted that the noble lord before whom it would come to be argued in his judicial capacity, and whose justice could not be impeached, would throw no impediment in the way of its speedy decision.

Lord Grenville replied to the observations of the Duke of Clarence, and moved the commitment of the bill. The Duke

of Bedford said he would have opposed the bill, had not a message been brought down, stating his Royal Highness' acquiescence to it. The bill itself he considered as highly objectionable, as it referred to two points, which were in themselves perfectly distinct. He certainly approved of the conduct of his Majesty, in having stated in the message to parliament that his Royal Highness was much encumbered with debts. But the conduct which he thought ministers ought to have adopted was, either to have voted the necessary sum for his establishment, and left to himself to take the proper measures for satisfying his creditors, or have waited till such time as he had chosen to come forward, to request the assistance of parliament for the purpose of their liquidation. Considering the rise of all articles, he did not think an addition of 25,000*l.* above what had been granted to former princes of Wales, too much on the present occasion. But he was surprised that ministers, who had formerly thought so much smaller a sum adequate for his establishment, should now think that the alteration in his circumstances required so large an addition as 75,000*l.* However disposed he might be to censure the extravagance of the Prince, he was not one of those who thought that it ought to be magnified into a crime. This style of asperity, he remarked, had been adopted by men, who wishing to go back to their constituents, after throwing away millions of the public money in the prosecution of a war, which they must, at least, admit to be unprofitable, were glad of an opportunity to claim some credit for their economy in the management of the national purse. They might say to their constituents, 'Though we have spent your money in the prosecution of a war for the support of the throne, do not accuse us of profusion: we have voted away several millions for that public object, but we have refused to grant even a few hundred thousands for the gratification of the heir-apparent, for the stability of whose claims we are contending.'

There were several circumstances, the Duke said, which tended to extenuate the conduct of the Prince. They ought to recollect his age, the station in which he was placed, and the insufficiency of his income to support the splendour necessary

for his rank. He thought it would have been much better to have advanced a sum at once sufficient to have liquidated the debts. His royal father might have been expected to have contributed for that purpose. It was rather singular, that when in the course of one year they had granted a subsidy of 1,200,000*l.* to the King of Prussia, and a much larger sum in loan to the Emperor of Austria, they should now be disputing about advancing a few hundred thousand pounds to the Prince. His Royal Highness was certainly as good security as the Emperor, for a sum so comparatively small. When ministers railed at the extravagance of the Prince, they forgot the examples of extravagance which had been given him in former times. Was his the only instance which had occurred of promises having been made to the public, and having afterwards been broken*? The same ministers who adopted this ungracious mode of conduct towards the Prince, if, at a future time, they saw him on the throne, would be disposed to pay the most implicit submission to his will, to contend that all his measures were infallibly right, and to brand with the name of Jacobins all those who might happen to be of a different opinion. This, he said, was not the way in which the monarchy of Great Britain ought to be supported.

The Earl of Lauderdale, another nobleman high in the confidence of the Prince of Wales, followed on the same side of the question. His lordship observed, that the sum which was to be granted to the Prince of Wales was by no means more than was necessary. It was not indeed so much as had been granted to his Royal Highness Frederick, the late Prince of Wales. That Prince had been allowed an income of 100,000*l.* a-year; and when the noble Secretary of State came forward to propose the commitment of this bill, which was, among other purposes, to maintain the dignity of the heir-apparent to the throne, he would do well to consider the proportion of the sum now to be granted to his Royal Highness, and that which had been granted to Prince Frederick, as well as to consider what had been allowed to various other branches of the royal

* His Grace here alluded to the promises that were made from the throne, on the occasion of the first payment of the debts of the civil list, promises that were more than once broken afterwards, and subsequent application made to parliament for relief.

family for the last century; and, when that was done, he believed the sum now proposed to be granted to the Prince would by no means appear to be exorbitant; it would be so far from it, that it would appear unequal to what parliament had allowed before on many occasions out of the pockets of the public. He did not mean to say, that more should be granted than was now proposed; but he wished to take a view of it, as compared to other allowances made out of the public purse to branches of the royal family. There was to be allowed to his Royal Highness a sum of 125,000*l.* a-year, Prince Frederick had 100,000*l.* Now, he would desire their lordships to compare the situation of the two princes. To do this, it would be necessary to consider the state of the revenue of the country at the time when Prince Frederick had this allowance, and the state of it now. There was a term which was, perhaps, more familiar to a French than an English ear, but which was, however, easily understood: he meant that of ‘direct and indirect taxes.’ At the time when Prince Frederick had his 100,000*l.* a-year, the indirect taxes were almost nothing when compared with the direct ones. The indirect taxes were those, which, being laid on the articles of life, which every one consumes, must necessarily fall on the consumer, and these were the only taxes to which the royal family were subject; for, by a clause which was uniformly inserted in bills that related to their income, they were exempted from direct taxes. Since the time when Prince Frederick had this income, upwards of three millions of indirect taxes had been laid upon the public, consequently the present Prince of Wales must bear his share of them as well as every other individual. None of those fell on Prince Frederick; it followed therefore, by calculation, that the 125,000*l.* now allowed to his Royal Highness was inferior in reality to that which had been allowed to his grandfather in a similar rank. The noble Secretary of State had, on a former occasion, expressed his regret that this measure was at all necessary. He regretted it also; but he regretted it too, that all the measures which were proposed to ameliorate the condition of his Royal Highness, did not go hand in hand. In the first place he must say, that in his opinion, much blame rested upon

ministers for this proceeding, and they had contrived, very unworthily, to load his Royal Highness with an unpopularity, which they could not have brought upon him, but by the means they had pursued in the progress of this proceeding.

The noble Duke who had preceded him in the debate had stated that they had given away the public money in loads and heaps, for carrying on the war : to this he readily assented, for they had done so, and for what ? Why, upon their own declarations, for the purpose chiefly of securing royalty in the country. In this declaration, they might be able, perhaps, to make something up to their own consciences, for he knew not what was passing there ; they would, however, find it difficult to satisfy the public upon that subject. But such was the avowed object. Now, he should be glad to know how any member of the House of Commons, who voted for the war upon this principle of supporting royalty in this country, could tell him that he had any great objection to this allowance to the Prince of Wales, especially when it was recollected that 99,000*l.* was granted to the emigrants upon the cause of royalty. He could not conceive how men who did this should oppose this income to the Prince, or say they were discontented with it, unless they supposed there was some other quarter which it was more important for them to conciliate, perhaps more useful than that of pleasing their constituents. Ministers had acted very warily in this business ; they had taken to themselves the credit of rescuing his Royal Highness from his embarrassments ; and to pay his creditors, they were unwilling that he should have any of the management of it himself, because they knew that, in that case, he would have the popularity of the measure, because the public would then see that the idea originated from him : but although ministers had thus acted, he, for one, must say, that while they pretended to provide for his dignity, they had done everything in their power to lower him in the opinion of the public. Had they allowed him this income, and given to him the management of it, they would have given a much more solid foundation for the support of his dignity.

His Lordship said, he did not now look whether the Prince had or had not been extravagant ; the question now was, what he came to the public for ? and upon this he must say that

the Prince had been hardly dealt with in this business, and he should not have been in the least surprised, had the demand been greater upon his Royal Highness than it really was. What had the Prince done to be censured as he had been? Was there anything so very extraordinary in his present situation? What prince did we know who had not, in his situation, come for a greater sum from the public? Persons at his time of life, and in his station, rather regulated their conduct with a reference to what they expect they will have, than by what they actually possess; and here it would not be improper to take a short view of what had been allowed to other branches of the royal family in this country. 500,000*l.* were paid for Queen Anne. George I. had 1,300,000*l.* extraordinary allowed him. George II. about 1,500,000*l.*, and this at a time when the public revenue was less by millions than it is at present, and when the indirect taxes, all of which his present Royal Highness must pay, like any other individual, chiefly constitutes the difference. His Royal Highness had yet only received an extraordinary from the public of 261,000*l.* For his own part, his Lordship said, he should not have been surprised if his Royal Highness had wanted a much larger sum than he did. It was not a case which he could affect to lament, particularly after his Royal Highness, having manifested a disposition to lessen his expenses, was dissuaded from attempting it, and told that such an attempt would appear too much an imitation of *M. Egalité*! By this sort of catechism was his Royal Highness brought into his present situation; and he was sure that, if the people of this country saw the matter in its real light, ministers would not be successful in their endeavours to bring odium on his Royal Highness; it would fall upon ministers themselves, who now affected to feel such perfect acuteness upon touching the public purse.

His Lordship disapproved of the restrictions, as far as they were personal against his Royal Highness; but observed he should approve of them, if they were merely general to any Prince of Wales. He blamed ministers for not making those provisions, when the subject of the Prince's debts was before parliament on a former occasion; for he did not see why one message to parliament should be followed up with more restric-

tion than another message. Ministers might ask, 'how could they do it?' There were a thousand ways by which they could. They might have done it by the very means they adopted now, if they had been willing. It would require more ingenuity for them to convince the public that they should not then have done it than that they would not; for their want of capacity was pretty evident. However, if they could not, they were the only persons who were in that situation. They had cherished the hopes of his Royal Highness, and now they attempted to degrade him; but he was not at all surprised at that, because it was perfectly correspondent with all their conduct towards his Royal Highness, and towards the public. He could enlarge more upon the subject, but the message delivered that day from his Royal Highness prevented him from opposing the principle of the bill.

Lord Grenville warmly defended the conduct of his Majesty's servants. It was not, he said, the ordinary course of debating in that house, to charge the King's ministers with trying to degrade the son of the King, and the heir-apparent to his throne. This was not an ordinary censure, and therefore he felt himself called upon to repel the attempt. What was the censure? and what were the arguments to support it? First, that ministers were the cause of these debts being contracted. They the cause of the debts being contracted? How so? Was there any man in the country who could lay his hand upon his heart, and say so? At the time when the subject of the debts of his Royal Highness was before parliament on a former occasion, he had not the honour of holding any official situation under his Majesty. He gave his opinion as a member of parliament only, and that opinion he was now ready to maintain. Whatever the noble earl might think, he was of opinion that the whole of the income now proposed might be proper, although the former income might have been sufficient for his Royal Highness, the whole difference being between the state of a married and an unmarried prince.

The question of the precise amount to be granted, his Lordship said, was one on which there must be a great diversity of opinions; and perhaps no two persons might exactly agree upon it. But how could it possibly be supposed that ministers

had endeavoured to attach any unpopularity on the Prince, by bringing the matter forward? But, it was said by the noble Earl, that ministers endeavoured to degrade the Prince of Wales by the measure which they now brought forward. He would wish to ask, whether the noble Earl would not have said, and, indeed, with a better chance of succeeding with the public if he did, that ministers, if they refused to bring this subject forward, had attempted to disgrace his Royal Highness? So that the endeavour to assist the Prince of Wales was not now brought forward against ministers, as an attempt to degrade him. He, on the contrary, trusted that their Lordships and the public would feel that ministers had done everything practicable to support the dignity of his Royal Highness.

Lord Grenville said, another point had been insisted upon with as little reason as the rest. It was contended that ministers were to blame for not bringing this business forward sooner, and to prevent the contracting of debts in future. What! before any application on the part of his Royal Highness to discharge his incumbrances? What right had they—what power had they—what influence had they to do so? When the application was regularly made, they brought forward the best mode they were able; and were they therefore to be censured for submitting the whole of it to parliament? Indeed, if the noble Earl blamed ministers for not coming forward on behalf of the Prince, without knowing that his Royal Highness wanted any of their assistance, to settle a mode for the payment of his debts, without knowing that he wished to adopt any, he must say that the blame was of a very extraordinary nature. There would have been very great indelicacy in such an officious conduct, and for which he had no doubt that the noble Earl would have been ready enough to censure ministers for adopting it. His Lordship then observed that it did not become him to take upon himself the defence of members of the other house of parliament, to whom allusion had been made; from some of whom he differed, and some of them he knew to be pretty well able to defend themselves. They had granted large supplies for the prosecution of this just and necessary war. They had many of them expressed much unwillingness at the present measure. He knew no

reason for saying that they were not actuated by a due sense of their public duty, and therefore, he for one, was not prepared to censure them for their conduct. The question before their Lordships was not a question of attachment to any particular person, but a public question, on which every member of parliament ought to act according to his own idea of public duty. There were, no doubt, some persons who wished to vilify his Royal Highness, and every branch of the royal family. Such persons were enemies to monarchy; but he was sure it was the object of ministers to keep the monarchy respectable and dignified, and he had no doubt but that such was the wish of the great mass of the people.

The Duke of Clarence observed, that the noble Secretary of State (Lord Grenville) had stated that he was not a minister when the debts of the Prince of Wales were before parliament on a former occasion; but he must call to his recollection that he was minister in 1792. He now wanted to know whether there was not a statement of facts on the incumbrances of the Prince of Wales at that time presented to a certain quarter. He knew there was, and therefore the noble Secretary could not be ignorant of the affairs of the Prince at that period.

Lord Grenville, in reply, said, there could be no debate where there was no equality, and therefore he must decline any further contest on this part of the subject. He had stated what part he had taken as a member of parliament, and what officially occurred upon the subject now before the house. He did not apprehend it came within the scope of his official duty to state in that house anything concerning an application made to another quarter.

The Earl of Moira, who possessed a large share of the confidence of the Prince, and whose character well justified the confidence which his Royal Highness reposed in him, now rose to state his opinion on the subject; and, in a manly and energetic speech, vindicated the conduct of the heir-apparent. He contended that the provisions of the bill were equally inadequate and inapplicable to the purposes which it held out, and maintained that, throughout the whole of the transaction, the Prince of Wales had been unfairly dealt with, in the man-

ner in which his situation had been brought before the public. If a different conduct had been pursued, he was sure the public would have been as ready to come forward with assistance, as the Prince was uneasy that circumstances made it necessary for him to apply for it. Nothing could more strongly point out this, than the communication which had been made to parliament, setting out, in language of heartfelt contrition, the embarrassments he laboured under; and this, he conceived, ought to have been received more as a candid and manly acknowledgment of his real situation, than held out as an inference that he had been guilty of any criminal extravagance, or idle waste of money not his own. He had always been one of those who thought the Prince's income inadequate even to the current expenses of his situation, and, therefore, he was the less surprised at his getting into debt. He differed entirely from the noble earl, who stated that his Royal Highness had regulated his conduct and expenses by catechism set down to him, by which he was led to believe, that whenever his debts amounted to a sum sufficiently large, he ought then, and not before, to make his situation known to parliament. By such advice he certainly might have been deceived, and encouraged to run heedlessly into expense; but he was sure that from no such catechism, and by no such advice, had his Royal Highness' conduct been dictated, and no man could have been more seriously affected than he was when he first knew the situation of his affairs; in short, his lordship thought language by far too harsh had been applied to his conduct, when his fault really amounted to no more than this. He seemed ignorant of the old proverb, 'that drop added to drop may become an ocean, and thus he had thoughtlessly involved himself in embarrassments much greater than he had any idea of.

His lordship deprecated the language and manner in which the business had been agitated in another place, and declared, that if he had been a member, he would have recollected that the subject was so nearly connected with one who was now Prince of Wales, (the heir-apparent of the crown,) and who in the fulness of time was to be their sovereign: he would likewise have recollected, that not only as a prince, but as a gen-

tleman, the Prince's situation claimed greater respect than this bill shewed to him; it was a bill of that kind that he must have resisted in every possible way, and to have done so would have well become a British House of Commons, whose duty should have led them to treat the Prince with a manly liberality, and to bury his imprudence in a noble silence. It was the duty of parliament to support the dignity of the monarchy, which this bill so deeply encroached upon, and none could be more bound in duty to have acted otherwise, than those who brought it forward. But how unfairly have they acted by the Prince. They grant him 125,000*l.* per annum, but do they, or can they say, that it is granted for the purposes proposed and stated? He had that day heard the message so graciously communicated by his Royal Highness through one of his household, which signified his acquiescence in whatever the wisdom of parliament might recommend. Having heard this, and agreeing perfectly in all that had fallen from an illustrious duke (the Duke of Clarence), were the only reasons that could induce him to give any support or countenance to the bill. This acquiescence on the part of the Prince, arising from his respect for parliament and the public, was the sole ground upon which he could vote for it, because he was sure, and he knew the Prince thought, that no bill more inimical and contradictory to his interest could have been introduced, even by his worst enemies. The Prince having paid such respect to the public, he trusted the public would not be defective in properly considering the hardship of his treatment, and that they would convince those who proposed this measure of their absurdity, and oblige them to remedy it in some shape or other; and he trusted parliament would take an early opportunity of bringing the business forward. He then alluded to what had taken place in 1787. He well knew that the Prince could never do with the income then allotted to him. He acknowledged that the message had been read to him, but in a manner too lightly, and that the sort of promise then made was founded on an expectation that he was to have 100,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the duchy of Cornwall. On the subject of the arrears due to the Prince, he held the same opinion which he had stated on a former night; and he contended that

the ministers had acted unfairly with the public as well as the Prince, and detracted from the credit which was due to the public. Had they been candid and manly in bringing facts, and facts only, before the public, they would have met the exigency most readily. They, however, had done otherwise, and there was nothing, he thought, so bad as that affectation of shame which ministers held out upon mentioning any thing connected with this subject. His lordship warmly reprobated the calumnies which had been circulated against his Royal Highness, and the injurious pamphlets, teeming with abuse, which daily issued from the press. As a full refutation of them all, he stated how willing the Prince was that every particular of those debts should be publicly known ;—to the commissioners every particular must be known. On the appointment of those commissioners, he must say by the way, that the Prince had been shamefully neglected ; he had nothing to do with the appointment, nor was he at all consulted, which looked very like an insult on the part of ministers, whether they meant it so or not. It likewise gave them a sort of influence amongst the creditors, which some time or other might appear at a Westminster election, as the commissioners would have it in their power to pay off the debentures of one set of creditors in preference to another, as it best suited their views. He declared that he did not mean now, or at any future stage of the bill, to move any alteration in it, because he trusted its absurdity was such, that parliament and the public would see the necessity of setting it aside. His lordship concluded with observing, that he did not think that this question could be entirely unconnected with party ; but he differed widely from those who thought that the opposition and harshness used in both houses on this bill would give pleasure to the ear of a certain great personage. Certain he was that his Royal Highness glowed with every sentiment of affection, duty, and gratitude for his royal parents.

The Earl of Lauderdale replied : he contended that nothing had fallen from any of the noble lords that could be called a vindication of ministers. He had always thought the Prince's income was inadequate ; at the same time he never would agree to have it made so much greater a burden upon

the people for the purpose of paying his debts. He had always believed, and now he had heard from authority, the nature of the message in 1787, which was, that it did not come as an actual promise from the Prince, but as a measure which ministers thought politically convenient for themselves at the time ; and they had persuaded his Royal Highness, against his own opinion, to agree to it. Promises of this sort had been made before. Here the noble Earl stated the first addition granted to the civil list in 1769, and that in 1777, when the speaker of the House of Commons had made a speech at their bar, which had justly merited and received the repeated thanks of both Houses of Parliament. His lordship next adverted to a new mode of reasoning which had been used that night ; noble lords talked of supporting the bill, because its absurdity was so great, that the public must see the necessity of setting it aside. He was very sorry to hear such declarations in that house. He saw much censure attached to the ministers in the whole of this business ; and was sure, if other men had been in power, and other men more naturally connected with his Royal Highness had given advice, such embarrassments never would have occurred ; an ample revenue would have been first allowed the Prince, and then an additional income upon his marriage, and all that would have been done by other ministers with credit to the Prince, and justice to the people. He begged leave to set the noble earl (Moira) who spoke last to rights, as to the supposed insinuation, that the opposition to the bill was to give pleasure to the ear of a certain illustrious personage ; he would think himself a madman or a fool, had he said any such thing. What he said alluded to a very different quarter ; and it must have been obvious he meant ministers, when he observed that he could not conceive any one would endeavour to degrade his Royal Highness, unless they knew it would please another quarter better than their constituents, and, perhaps, be more useful and profitable to them.

In a subsequent debate, Lord Moira repeated his former objections to the bill, and advanced some fresh arguments to shew its unreasonableness. He put it to their lordships, whether it was proper that the Princess, after being invited over by the

unanimous wish of the nation, under the idea of being made the partner and sharer of the splendour due to the rank she was to hold, should be sent into a retirement of nine years? If the measure of dignity and splendour necessary to the support of the character of the Prince of Wales could not be supported under the sum of 125,000*l.* per annum as declared by the bill, how could the Prince support it by so curtailed an income? If it was constitutionally necessary that such rank and appearance should be kept up by the Prince, it was acting contrary to the interests of the monarchy, and therein contrary to the interests of the country, which was attached to the interests of the monarchy, to make such arrangements as would not permit him to support that dignity. His Royal Highness must draw the same inference; and every man in his closet, reasoning upon the subject, would, and must necessarily, draw the same conclusion. At the expiration of the nine years of retirement, where would be the difference of the situation of the Prince, as relative to the monarchy? If he could not support the becoming dignity as proposed during the nine years, at the expiration of that term he stood exactly in the same relative situation as he now did, and according to this principle, all he received above the present proposed income, would be a lavish waste of the public money. If, on the contrary, such arrangements were made as would disencumber his Royal Highness, he could take upon him to say that, from the disposition of his Royal Highness, all matters might in future proceed to the satisfaction of the nation. His lordship concluded with condemning the bill, as bearing the appearance of driving his Royal Highness into retirement, without even leaving him the grace of the measure.

Lord Thurlow, whose sentiments were entitled to particular respect, as well on account of his own high character, as on the fact which was generally known, that he had been consulted both by the King and the Prince on the subject of his Royal Highness' embarrassments, declared, that he thought the Prince would acquire real and solid dignity by retirement; but at the same time, he did not think that principle should be pushed so far as to say that all splendour was unnecessary. On the contrary, the splendour which con-

stitutions had thought proper to throw around their magistrates, had an effect upon the minds of the public, and was one of the lines of attachment which existed between them.

Lord Loughborough (the lord chancellor), in a very able and eloquent speech, vindicated the character of the Prince. It had been supposed by some, his lordship said, that the debates on this subject had gone the length of attaching criminality to the magnitude of the debts; but he felt quite differently. He approved of the bill, because he thought the measure evinced a great deal of care and circumspection to the dignity of the Prince. It was a necessary consequence, that the action of personages of exalted rank should be remarked and felt by mankind; and he conceived it arose from this principle, that they felt themselves interested in their conduct. From this connexion—this kind of union between them—arose that circumstance of the peculiar attention paid to their actions. A private man in his actions might pass unnoticed, because they extended in their consequences only to himself; but not so with public characters. Those who stood in the exalted ranks of life must move in their conduct by other rules than those in the lower spheres. In them it would be low and paltry to count pounds, shillings, and pence, and to reckon with minute attention the expense of every article. If extravagance, or rather want of economy, was to be the consequence, it was excusable; if the contrary was the case, their very virtues might be turned against them: taste, liberality, generosity, benevolence, &c. were but so many incitements to error. Those mild virtues which adorned human nature, in such characters, would lead them into the devious path of wrong. The artist exerted all his skill in the fabrication of various articles, which he presented to them for reward. Every thing was unfolded to their view, and every incitement stirred. And the more they possessed the above virtues, the more were they likely to act with incaution. The regulations, therefore, which prevented such incautious excesses, were not directed against the Prince,—they were guards which surrounded him, and prevented him from being liable to the encroachments such as he had represented. In such regulations the honour of the character felt no wound.

His lordship next defended the appointment of the commissioners, who, he said, were selected from high official situations, and persons perfectly conversant in business. In the manner in which these were appointed and the debts arranged, the house had shewn how much they considered it as connected with themselves. It was a matter of great delicacy to put any confidential servant of the Prince in such a situation. It might be necessary to ask many questions, in the adjustment of the debts, which a friend to the Prince would not like to do. Such a situation he thought best avoided, and the present appointment was such as must afford satisfaction.

This was the last debate of importance on the subject; and a few days afterwards (June 26, 1795) the bill received the royal assent by commission. A motion was made in the House of Commons for an inquiry into the Prince's claim to the proceeds of the duchy of Cornwall, during his minority; but not being supported, it was negatived without a division.

We cannot dismiss this subject without introducing an anecdote which may serve to throw some light on the characters of some of the individuals who were most free in their censures on the conduct of the Prince of Wales. Far be it from us to condemn any man, in either House of Parliament, for the freedom of his language. It is the privilege of their station, and the spirit and essence of the constitution would be violated if it were suffered to be attacked. But we should be in a state of licentiousness, not of rational freedom, if it were permitted to a member of the House of Commons to deliver a violent speech against an exalted personage at one period of his life, and afterwards not to be allowed to apply to that individual, when he ceased to be in parliament, some of those observations which he applied with so much asperity to his Royal Highness.

It is a curious fact, and no less curious than true, that one of the persons in the House of Commons who reflected most severely on the conduct of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, at this period, afterwards became a defaulter himself to an amount *full as great*, we believe, as that of his Royal Highness' debts, and *certainly* attended with far more individual misery and ruin (misery and ruin that subsist to the present hour); not to say a word of the

national embarrassments it produced, and which shook the credit of the kingdom to its centre, than any extravagances the Prince of Wales ever committed, or the most bitter and malignant of his slanderers ever imputed to him. The person to whom we allude was, at the period of which we are speaking, a representative of one of the northern counties, and a provincial banker of first-rate eminence. He was, besides, one of those members who stand upon what is called the independent interest, and his sentiments were always heard in the house with the utmost attention. It cannot be doubted, then, but that, when such a man stood up in his place in the House of Commons, and taxed the Prince of Wales with a violation of his promise, with indiscretion and profusion, with riot and luxury, and warned the house not to grant away the money of their constituents improvidently, that the sentiments of such a man were heard with attention, and produced a corresponding effect. His speech became a sort of text book for the pamphleteers of the day; and his constituents, though perhaps they did not formerly thank him, yet they individually approved of his conduct, and at a succeeding general election, testified their approbation in a way most honourable and gratifying to a person ambitious of a seat in parliament, by making his return certain. This much it is but justice, to the character of the individual alluded to, to say.—We admit, in its utmost latitude, the right of every member of parliament to canvass the conduct of the highest personages. But we beg our readers to mark the sequel of the history of the person who made more free, perhaps, than any other with the conduct of the Prince of Wales, when his Royal Highness' debts were under discussion. A few years after that period, his banking establishment, which was one of the first in England, and, through its ramifications and credit, was extended through all the counties north of the Humber, failed, and produced general distress wherever its notes were in circulation. We have heard the amount of the quantity of notes of this bank, or of others depending upon it, which were in circulation at the time of its bankruptcy; and, if our recollection serves us right, it considerably exceeded the amount of the Prince of Wales' debts, to say not a word of securities which were lodged in this bank at the period of its

stoppage. Here, then, we would ask a question—Was the Prince of Wales' indiscretion in contracting debts to a large amount, or this private individual's inattention (to use the softest phrase) in permitting vast sums to be issued by his firm—sums which, if he had taken the trouble to inspect the books of his banking concern, he must have known that neither he nor his partners had adequate funds to answer, guilty of the most culpable negligence? No question could arise, even if the argument of the Prince of Wales' ridiculous and impudent calumniator (Mr. Jefferys) were true, namely, that the Prince had been put in a state of bankruptcy, by the bill which provided for the liquidation of his debts; because a fund was assigned for the payment of all claims upon his Royal Highness, and the persons who felt pressed for money could carry their debentures to a ready money market. No question could arise (if we may compare great things with small, exalted personages with little) between the situation of the creditors of his Royal Highness, and those of the individual to whom we have alluded. The debts of the individual who severely taxed the conduct of the Prince of Wales were debts contracted for purposes of mercenary and sordid emolument. Gain was the object; risk was the means. The issues of paper from the banking-house in question were far greater than their funds were adequate to pay, and the result was, that the holders of their notes, who amounted to an immense number of individuals, were plunged into a state of the most pitiable distress. They had parted with their property for these notes, upon the faith that they were equivalent to cash payments, and consequently they had demanded no advantages which a less secure mode of payment would have justified. Could the creditors of the Prince of Wales allege this? No! Unquestionably they did not look for ready money payment from his Royal Highness, and, like true tradesmen, they charged the Prince, upon every article they furnished him with, an advance equivalent, in their estimation, to the risk of the credit they gave. It is an excellent apophthegm of Swift, and one in daily practice, that '*an expert tradesman makes a few of his best customers answer, not only for those whom he gets*

little or nothing by, but for those who run away or die in his debt.'

Who can entertain the slightest doubt, but that in this way the majority of the creditors of the Prince of Wales secured themselves? but who for a moment can suppose that this was the conduct of the creditors of the individual who so bitterly arraigned his Royal Highness.

On the one part, there was an individual deeply conversant in commercial transactions, and, from his education and habits of life, minutely acquainted with the mysteries of ledgers and day-books; on the other, there was a Prince to whom such affairs were almost wholly foreign. That the man of the comptoir should accuse the Prince need not astonish us; but that the same individual, a few years afterwards, should fall into the same indiscretions (to say no worse of them), and should produce, by his misconduct and the avarice of his partners, an infinitely greater quantity of public and private unhappiness than any thoughtlessness of the Prince of Wales has ever given birth to, and should, under such circumstances, and with a full recollection of his former character of an accuser, and the impression which his accusation produced, be passed by unnoticed, requires, we must confess, a degree of forbearance which we do not feel ourselves in possession of.

The question which was most strongly urged against the Prince of Wales was, that, possessed of a very splendid income, he had not confined his expenditure within the bounds of that income. The next question was, his promise to parliament to regulate his expenses so as they should not exceed the bounds of his income. We have already shewn that this promise was not very fairly extorted from his Royal Highness. But let us now consider the difference of conduct between his Royal Highness, and that of one of his principal accusers in the House of Commons. His Royal Highness contracted his debts imprudently and improvidently enough we will allow, but the basest and most impudent of his accusers dare not venture to impeach him of any avaricious motives in their contraction. They were debts, to say the worst of them, of heedlessness and improvidence—debts

which the liberality of the nation ought long since to have discharged! But the debts of the individual, who so severely blamed the Prince of Wales, were debts of a far different description. They were debts contracted with the poor, the industrious, and the indigent, through the medium of a circulation of country bank-notes, the credit of which rested almost solely on the character for good faith and integrity which the opponent, or rather the accuser of his Royal Highness had acquired!

Judge here, then, of the character of those who so severely arraigned the conduct of the Prince of Wales. Admitting his Royal Highness to have been guilty of imprudence, was he guilty of criminality or fraud? Was there more harm, or any deeper mischief attending the heir-apparent's contracting a debt to the amount of 700,000*l.*, divided, for by far the greatest part, among a number of wealthy individuals, whose charges, if they were paid, secured them from any loss that might arise from procrastination of payment, than in the conduct of a country banker, who, relying on the honesty of his partners, could permit them to issue sums to an unlimited amount in his name, after the warning voice of two stoppages of payment, and yet stand up in his place in the House of Commons to accuse the Prince. From the attacks of such an adversary would the Prince wish to be defended?—from the attacks of such a man would the most tenacious of his friends think it necessary to defend him? The Prince might plead his own improvidence, the carelessness or negligence of his servants, but such an apology would not be admitted on the part of the person to whom we have alluded. His mature years, his commercial habits, rendered him completely obnoxious to the rigid application of the law maxim, *qui facit per alteram, facit per se*; he could not plead, who, on the hustings of the county which he then represented, had been objected to, on the score that an opulent landed interest would receive a severe disgrace if they submitted to the indignity of permitting a banker's clerk to represent them, that he was ignorant of the speculations of his partners. Yet such was the man who stood foremost among the accusers of the Prince of Wales.

On a review of the two cases there can be no manner of doubt, but that the improvidence of the banker was attended with much more fatal consequences than it could ever be pretended flowed from any imputed extravagance of the Prince of Wales. The one impoverished a populous and industrious district of the kingdom, but who ever heard of the ruined creditors of the Prince of Wales*? Here then seems to be the point at issue: the worst that the accusers of the Prince of Wales could allege against his Royal Highness was improvidence, by which a few mercenary individuals were disappointed in their hopes of extravagant gain: one of the prime accusers of the Prince of Wales, through the mismanagement of his commercial concerns, incurs debts to full as large an amount as his Royal Highness; and, while every epithet of reproach is lavished on the Prince, shall such a man pass uncensured?

From the multitude of libels that have at different times appeared against the Prince, it is impossible to notice each separate publication; some of them probably have escaped our search, and perhaps we have reason to congratulate ourselves on that score, for more vile and miserable effusions than the greater part of them it has seldom been our misfortune to peruse: but we have paid that respectful attention to the proceedings of the two Houses of Parliament, whenever the interests of his Royal Highness were concerned, which became us to show to the peers of the realm and to the representatives of the nation in parliament assembled; and this attention alone has drawn from us the preceding remarks on the conduct of an individual member of the House of Commons, who, according to our conceptions, censured the Prince unjustly, and whose own subsequent embarrassments were ten thousand times less worthy of indulgence than those of his Royal Highness†.

* We are aware that Mr. Jefferys may be quoted against us in regard to this point, but we must observe that we do not consider Mr. Jefferys as any authority, and we shall have occasion hereafter specifically to refute the calumnies of that gentleman.

† The conduct of some of the members in both Houses of Parliament, who opposed the claims of the Prince of Wales upon this occasion, and who were not themselves very remarkable for the purity or correctness of their characters, reminds us of the old fable, that Jupiter had hung over every man's shoulders two satchels, of which one hung before, and contained the faults of his neighbours, and the other behind, which contained his own.

Non videmus id manticæ quod in tergo est.

We have been led into this vindication of his Royal Highness on the mere ground of comparison, of the particular relation in which he stood with that of certain individuals, whose chief aim, at this time, appeared to be to defame his Royal Highness, although they were themselves the greatest prodigals, and the most lavish spendthrifts, in their expenditure of immense sums of money belonging to the public, to which they had no further right than was given to them by the character of official trustees, with which the nation had invested them. Whatever the prodigality and extravagance of the Prince of Wales might have been, his actions were never tainted with dishonesty, nor fraud; and, according to the principle, that those who live in glass-houses should not throw stones, the abuse which was heaped upon the Prince recoiled upon those whose want of fair dealing and of principle instigated them to the dissemination of it; it must, however, be admitted, that in some quarters the poison worked well, and was productive of the severest pain to the parties interested.

On no occasion which happened in the last or present century were 'the coiners of scandal and clippers of reputation' more busy at work than on the marriage of the Prince of Wales. Almost every day produced its pamphlet, written either in the worst spirit of lampoon, or unblushingly defending the grossest errors; whilst not a few were put forth to justify extortionate claims, and gratify the worst spirit of extortion and threat. Amongst the latter stands conspicuously Mr. Jefferys, who provided the jewels on the marriage, and who represents himself in his pamphlet as *the most injured of men*, chiefly because a jury could not be persuaded to award him the *whole* of his demand, for the recovery of which he instituted an action against the Prince in the Court of King's Bench.

Without, however, referring to the immediate subject of Jefferys' pamphlet, which is principally on the adjustment of a disputed account, we shall extract the following passage, as it contains a notification of the feelings of his Royal Highness on the proposed marriage, which is at complete variance with the generally-received opinion; but as it is given upon the

authority of the Prince himself, we will not pretend either to confirm or discredit it.

‘An event,’ says Mr. Jefferys, ‘was now about to take place, of great national importance in the establishment of the Prince of Wales, the intelligence of which afforded very general satisfaction to the public; it was the proposed marriage of his Royal Highness with the Princess of Brunswick, and his expected *final* separation from Mrs. Fitzherbert.

‘At that period, I passed much of my time at Carlton-House; and, though I may provoke the hostility of the Prince of Wales, and the anger of Mrs. Fitzherbert, I will state that, which, from my being so frequently with his Royal Highness, I had an opportunity of observing and knowing.

‘I declare it to be my firm belief, however subsequent events, which may truly be termed unfortunate *for his Royal Highness and for the country, may contradict the probability of my assertion, that no person in the kingdom appeared to feel, and I believe at the the time did actually feel, more sincere pleasure in the prospect of the proposed marriage and the consequent separation from Mrs. Fitzherbert than his Royal Highness.* I will not repeat the expressions of his Royal Highness upon this subject, it is sufficient for me to say, that what I heard was not of a nature to increase my respect for the character of that lady; but far otherwise, as it totally removed from my mind every apprehension I had before entertained, that his Royal Highness would be displeased by an application to her for money; I accordingly sent in my account; when I was told, at the house of Mrs. Fitzherbert, I must make my application to the Prince for the payment of it. I therefore informed his Royal Highness of what had passed, who directed General Hulse to discharge the account.

‘But to return to my narrative. On the proposed marriage of the Prince of Wales, his Royal Highness gave me orders to procure the jewels necessary on that occasion: no limit was fixed for the amount, but that the finest and best of everything was to be provided. My wish was, in the execution of these orders, not to go to too great or an unnecessary expense; but the magnitude of the occasion, and the extensive orders in pursuance of which I acted, exceeding my own ideas, the

amount naturally extended to a very considerable sum, fifty-four thousand pounds; and nearly ten thousand pounds, in addition, for jewels as presents from his Royal Highness, on the marriage, to the Queen and Princesses.

‘It having been reported at the time, that I had gone (contrary to what I have just asserted) to greater expense than was necessary, I beg leave, in contradiction of such report, and to bring the question fairly before the public, to state the following circumstance:—I had, by the desire of the Prince of Wales, procured a setting for the miniature-picture of his Royal Highness, intended to be sent to Brunswick for the Princess, surrounded with large brilliants, and a brilliant chain, amounting to two thousand five hundred guineas. As soon as it was completed, I attended with his Royal Highness at Buckingham-house, to submit it to the approbation of the Queen, previously to its being sent to the Continent. Her Majesty thought it by no means of sufficient elegance for the occasion, and I accordingly prepared another, pursuant to the orders I then received, amounting to more than four thousand pounds.

‘Could it for a moment be supposed (without an insult to the high and august character of her Majesty) that I hazarded any thing by executing the orders received from such authority. I could not and did not entertain any doubts upon the subject, but acted as I was commanded to do.

‘A considerable time after the jewels had been delivered, the amount of my charge was disputed by the commissioners appointed to settle the Prince’s affairs. I resisted the ruinous deduction they proposed to make, and submitted my claims to a jury of my country, in three actions brought against the commissioners, which came on before Lord Chief Justice Kenyon, in February, 1796. But the cause tried was for the jewels furnished for the Princess, amounting, as I have before said, to the sum of fifty-four thousand pounds, when I obtained a verdict for the *whole of my demand*, deducting only so much as was charged for the insurance of the Prince’s life, which, from the magnitude of the concern, and when it is considered who was the debtor, was a necessary measure of precaution. The Chief Justice, in his charge to the jury, stated, that the risk which had made

such precaution necessary, being at an end, the insurance ought to be taken off the account. With this decision I was naturally satisfied, especially when accompanied, as it was, by an observation from Lord Kenyon, that all hazard was then ended.'

In a former part of this work, we have related the circumstance of the Prince borrowing 420*l.* of Jefferys, which was to have been returned in ten days; the manner in which he obtained the payment of this sum, is contained in the following extract:—

'Through the medium of Mr. Tyrwhitt, then secretary to the Prince, I dutifully solicited an audience of his Royal Highness. I attended twice, *each time by appointment, and waited many hours.* At last, the Prince, coming into the room with several gentlemen, asked me, in a *hasty tone of voice* 'what I wanted?' I was so agitated with the contemplation of my own situation, and so confused by the unusual mode in which his Royal Highness spoke to me, as to be hardly able to make any answer. His Royal Highness then said, '*I believe* I owe you some money!—Four hundred and twenty pounds;—do you want it *now?*' I humbly replied, when it suited his Royal Highness' convenience. The Prince said, *very well*, and left the room without another word; nor was I able to form any expectation when it would be repaid.

'Leaving Carlton House in a very dejected state of mind, as may be supposed, I met, in Pall-Mall, the late Admiral Payne, who had been the confidential friend and secretary to the Prince, but had recently been dismissed. Admiral Payne asking me if I had been lately at Carlton-House, I related to him what had passed. He said, the conduct I experienced was most shameful, but that he could put me in the way of getting the money.

'We walked together for a considerable time in St. James' Square, when he told me, if I would write such a letter as he would dictate, I should get the money directly. Pursuing his instructions, I accordingly wrote the same day to the Prince, stating my hope that his Royal Highness would excuse the application I made to him for the payment of the four hundred and twenty pounds, which I had advanced at his request nearly fifteen months before; that my necessities were

very urgent in consequence of the heavy losses I had sustained in his service ; the consideration of which, together with the recollection that the money had only been borrowed for a few days, would (I trusted) induce his Royal Highness not to leave town for Newmarket, where he was going the next morning, without first returning this money. That I was prevented by delicacy to his Royal Highness, in the morning when I had been with him, from mentioning the circumstance, so many gentlemen being present.

‘ The letter produced the effect expected by Admiral Payne, the money being sent to me that evening. This application for money, I believe, produced such a degree of irritation in the mind of the Prince, as to do away all recollection of what for years he had termed services ; and was, I believe, considered by his Royal Highness to be such an offence as never to be forgiven.’

Prevailed on by the Princess of Wales, by his father, and his best friends, as well as impressed with the importance and necessity of the measure, the Prince of Wales now reduced his establishment, but retained the Marchioness of Townshend, the Countesses of Jersey, Carnarvon, and Cholmondeley. The Princess requested only the discharge of one of their number, but the favour was refused.

Soon after the marriage of the Prince and Princess, a circumstance occurred which excited the indignation of the Princess towards Lady Jersey, and tended additionally to develop the feelings of the Queen towards her Royal Highness. In the month of August, 1795, whilst residing at Brighton, the Princess committed to the care of Dr. Randolph a packet of letters to convey to Brunswick, as he expressed his intention of visiting Germany. Those letters were private and confidential: they contained strictures on the character of the Queen, and one of them had been imprudently laid about by her Royal Highness, after she had written it. That letter was perused by Lady Jersey, and to the Queen she determined to convey it, with those which constituted the remainder of the packet. The letters never reached their destination, and were afterwards possessed by Queen Charlotte. How are those circumstances to be accounted for?

The Princess of Wales repeatedly stated that she knew the letters were intercepted by the Countess of Jersey, and delivered by her to the Queen. Lady Jersey denied the charge: she contended that she had no concern with the packet, and that to Dr. Randolph alone all blame must attach. He, in his turn, exculpated himself from the charge, and gave a statement to Lady Jersey of all the circumstances; maintaining, that not visiting Brunswick, he had returned the packet by coach to the Princess. The Princess expressed herself indignant at the loss, and required an explanation. Inquiries and investigation ensued; but it was not for some time after the charge was made, nor until the public newspapers accused her of treachery, deceit, and embezzlement, that Lady Jersey endeavoured to clear her character from such imputations; and at length she addressed privately to Dr. Randolph the following letter.

‘ Pall Mall.

‘The newspapers being full of accusations of my having opened a letter either to, or from, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, and as I cannot in any way account for what can have given rise to such a story, excepting the loss of those letters with which you were intrusted last summer, I must entreat that you will state the whole transaction, and publish the accounts in the newspapers you may think fit. Her Royal Highness having told me, at the time when my inquiries at Brighton, and yours in London, proved ineffectual, that she did not care about the letters, they being only letters of form, the whole business made so little impression on me, that I do not even recollect in what month I had the pleasure of seeing you at Brighton. I think you will agree with me, that defending myself from the charge of opening a letter is pretty much the same thing as if I was to prove that I had not picked a pocket; yet in this case, I believe, it may be of some use to shew upon what grounds so extraordinary a calumny is founded. As I cannot wish to leave any mystery upon this affair, you are at liberty to publish this letter, if you think proper to do so.’

To this application Dr. Randolph paid no attention; but, as the subject attracted public notice, and became a subject of universal reprobation, Lord Jersey addressed to Dr. Randolph another letter.

‘ Sir,

‘ Lady Jersey wrote to you early in the last week, requesting that a full statement from you, of all that had passed relating to the packet of letters belonging to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, might appear in public print. To that letter she has received no answer from you; nor have I learned that any such publication has appeared. The delay I have been willing to attribute to accident. But it now becomes my duty to call upon you, and I do require it of you, that an explicit narrative may be laid before the public: it is a justice she is entitled to, a justice Lady Jersey’s character claims, and which she has, and which you have acknowledged she has, a right to demand at your hands.

‘ Your silence upon this occasion I shall consider as countenancing that calumny which the false representations of the business have so shamefully and unjustly drawn upon Lady Jersey.

‘ I am, &c.’

In consequence of this further application, Dr. Randolph, in a few days, wrote to Lady Jersey, in which, after prefatory matter, he gave her permission to make the following statement public.

‘ I need not recall to your Ladyship’s recollection the interview I had with the Princess at Brighton, when she delivered to me the packet in question: all her attendants in waiting were, I believe, present; and the conversation generally turned upon the various branches of her august family, and the alteration I should find in them after an absence of ten years. This interview, if I am not mistaken, took place on the 13th of August; and after waiting, by her Royal Highness’s desire, till the 14th, when the Prince was expected from Windsor, to know if he had any commands to honour me with, I had no sooner received from Mr. Churchill his Royal Highness’s answer, than I departed from London with the intention of proceeding to Yarmouth. On my arrival in town, finding some very unpleasant accounts of the state of Mrs. R.’s health, I took the liberty of signifying the occurrence to her Royal Highness; annexing to it, at the same time, a wish to defer my journey for the present, and that her Royal Highness would permit me to return the packet, or allow me to consign it to the care of a friend, who was going into Germany, and would see it safely delivered. To this I received, through your Ladyship, a most gracious message from her Royal Highness, requesting me by all means to lay aside

my intentions, and to return the packet. In consequence of such orders, I immediately went to Carlton House to inform myself by what conveyance the letters and parcels were usually sent to Brighton, and was told that no servant was employed, but that every day they were, together with the newspapers, committed to the charge of the Brighton post-coach from the Golden-cross, Charing-cross.

‘On the subsequent morning, therefore, I attended at the Golden-cross, previous to the departure of the coach, and having first seen it regularly booked, delivered my parcel, inclosing the Princess’s packet, addressed to your Ladyship at the Pavilion. Immediately afterwards I set out for Bath, and had scarcely been a fortnight at home, when, to my great surprise and mortification, I received the following letter from your Ladyship, dated Brighton, September 1st:

‘In consequence of your letter, I had her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales’ commands to desire that, as you did not go to Brunswick, you should return the packet which she had given you. I wrote, accordingly, about a fortnight ago. Her Royal Highness, not having received the packet, is uneasy about it, and desires you to inform me how you sent the letters to her, and where they were directed. If left at Carlton House, pray call there, and make some inquiries respecting them.

‘I am, &c.’

To this letter Dr. Randolph thus replied :

‘I know not when I have been more seriously concerned than at the receipt of your Ladyship’s letter, which was forwarded to me this morning.

‘The morning I left town, which was on the 20th of August, I went to the Brighton post-coach, which I was told at Carlton House was the usual conveyance of the Princess’s papers and packets, and booked a parcel addressed to your Ladyship at the Pavilion, inclosing the letters of her Royal Highness. I have sent to a friend in London by this night’s post, to trace the business, and will request your Ladyship to let your servants call at the Ship, the inn I believe the coach drives to at Brighton, to make inquiry there, and to examine the bill of parcels for Thursday, the 20th of August. If this prove not successful, I shall hold it my duty to return to town, and pursue the discovery myself. I shall

not be easy till the packet is delivered safe ; and trusting that this will soon be the case,

‘ I remain, &c.’

Bath, September 4th, 1795.

The apparent quarrel between Dr. Randolph and Lord Jersey was always stated by the Princess of Wales to have been merely a shallow manœuvre to exonerate each other, and above all Lady Jersey. That she, or some one by her authority, conveyed the letters to the Queen, is indisputable, since observations which they contained were subsequently mentioned by her, and retailed to the royal family, and to many persons connected with the court. It was the opinion of the Princess of Wales that Lady Jersey was the chief instrument in this transaction ; and believed, either that she received the packet from Dr. Randolph, prior to his quitting Brighton, or directed him to transmit it under cover to the Queen.

The Prince on this occasion vindicated the characters of Lady Jersey and Dr. Randolph—stated that, in his opinion, his mother would not have been a party to conduct so improper—and finally blamed the Princess for writing what she would object to any person perusing. That it would have been most wise, and prudent, and delicate for her Royal Highness to have concealed, at that time, her sentiments, and on that subject, even from her friends, there can be no doubt ; but that the conduct of Lady Jersey, the Queen, and even of Dr. Randolph, was highly reprehensible, appears to be equally manifest. The fact, when developed, tended greatly to increase the affection evinced for her Royal Highness by the people, and was received with general and just disapprobation.

On the 17th of January, 1796, being just nine calendar months, wanting one day, from her marriage, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales was delivered of a princess at Carlton House, between the hours of nine and ten in the morning. Conformably to the etiquette observed on such occasions, his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President of his Majesty's Council, his Grace the Duke of Leeds, the Earl of Jersey, Master of the Horse to his

Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Right Honourable Lord Thurlow, and the Ladies of the Princess of Wales' Bed-chamber, were present at the royal accouchement.

The royal infant was christened in the grand audience-chamber at Carlton House, on the 16th of February, his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury performing the ceremony. The infant Princess was named Charlotte Augusta. The sponsors were his Majesty, the Queen, and her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, proxy for her Serene Highness the Duchess of Brunswick.

Addresses of congratulation in the usual form were voted by both houses of parliament, and presented to their Majesties, and to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, who received the two houses in a private manner. The corporation of the city of London, at the same time, voted an address of congratulation to their Royal Highnesses; but it being intimated to the Lord Mayor by Lord Cholmondeley, who was at the head of his Royal Highness' household, 'that the Prince of Wales being under the necessity of reducing his establishment, he was precluded from receiving the addresses in a manner suitable to his situation;' and desiring that copies of the addresses might be sent to him, it was moved by Mr. Deputy Birch, 'That his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales having stated that the inadequacy of his establishment precluded him from receiving the compliments of congratulation voted to be presented to their Royal Highnesses in a way suitable to his situation, this court is of opinion that it cannot, consistently with its own dignity, suffer the said compliments to be presented in any other way than the customary form.' After some conversation, the motion was agreed to, and the Remembrancer was ordered to convey a copy of it to his Royal Highness.

At the next Court of Common-council, the Lord Mayor rose to state to the court the conference he had had with the Prince of Wales, on the subject of not receiving the congratulatory address of the city in the usual form; observing, that in a matter of so delicate a nature, he had thought it his duty to commit the purport of this conversation to writing, which,

with leave of the court, he would wish to read. The communication was as follows :—

‘ In consequence of a letter from Lord Cholmondeley, dated January 31st, 1796, stating that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales wished to speak to me at Carlton House, and to give me a private audience on Tuesday, (but which appointment was afterwards, by a second letter, fixed for Monday last, at one o’clock,) I had the honour of waiting on his Royal Highness, who addressed me by saying, that he had seen with concern in the public papers a statement of what had passed in the Court of Common-council on Thursday last, respecting a letter written by Lord Cholmondeley, at the command of his Royal Highness, and sent to the City Remembrancer, conveying his sentiments on the intended address of congratulation to their Royal Highnesses, which sentiments he conceived had been mistaken or misunderstood, or at least a very different construction had been given to them than he meant, or was intended to be conveyed by that letter. His Royal Highness said that he thought it incumbent on him to preserve a consistent character; that as his establishment, for certain reasons, had been reduced, and that the necessary state appendages attached to the character and rank of the Prince of Wales did not in consequence exist, his Royal Highness conceived he could not receive an address in state, and particularly from the Corporation of the City of London, for which he entertained the highest veneration and respect. His Royal Highness, therefore, thought it would appear disrespectful to the first body corporate in the kingdom to receive the members of it inconsistently with their character and his own dignity.’

After this candid and manly explanation on the part of the Prince of Wales, we should have thought it impossible for any one to indulge in cavils on this subject; but such is the perverseness of some dispositions, that the most innocent, nay, sometimes the most laudable, actions of other’s lives, furnish their malignity with food for detraction. This is strikingly exemplified in the conduct of an illiberal anonymous writer, who censures the Prince of Wales on this occasion with equal injustice and asperity. The Prince of Wales, from feelings

of propriety, and a strong sense of his own dignity, declined receiving the address of the City of London in its corporate capacity. This the writer to whom we have alluded thinks proper to stigmatize as proceeding from spleen and ill-humour, and calculated for no other end than to make the City of London dissatisfied with his Royal Highness. We will put it to this gentleman himself—would it have been quite decorous for the Prince of Wales, then living on a retrenched scale of expense, with little more state than some of the most opulent nobility of the land can and do assume, to have received the Lord Mayor of the City of London, arrayed in the city regalia, and attended by the Courts of Aldermen and Common-council, all habited in their state dresses, with as little ceremony as if they had been a deputation of his own tradesmen who waited upon him? So preposterous an idea could have never entered into the brains of any one, but a writer determined, at all events, right or wrong, to find fault with the conduct of the Prince of Wales,

The result of the quarrels of the Prince and Princess of Wales, previously and subsequently to her accouchement, was neither magical nor singular; mutual distrust, dissatisfaction, and want of affection, were naturally succeeded by indifference and disgust. The Prince loved society, and did not love his home. He loved Mrs. Fitzherbert, and did not love his consort. He had not selected her for his wife, and the worthless and interested had vilified her. She was unsuited to the Prince, and she soon discovered the fact; she was open and ingenuous, and so was the Prince; they neither concealed their dislikes, but the one was well, and the other ill founded; the one was the result of unkindness, justifiable jealousy, neglect and misrepresentation; the other resulted from the previous dislike of the Prince to marriage; from his original indifference to the Princess, and from his affection for other individuals, less morally and mentally deserving. Whenever the Princess complained to the King, he pitied her, and sympathized with her; but he advised that privacy should be observed, and if they could not be happy with each other, at least that their external conduct should not indicate their dislike. To this recommendation they mutually deferred, and

hence on many occasions the ladies in waiting were by them directed to withdraw. Soon after the appearance in public of the Princess after her accouchement, a dispute originated, on a matter of comparatively trivial importance, but which, in the end, tended materially to widen that breach which had so long existed. This ended in another temporary separation, and in solitude and misery; with but two faithful domestics about her person, the Princess of Wales had to sustain the evils of suspicion, calumny, and disappointment. That this state of feeling could not long exist without some development or alteration, could not be expected, and, consequently, to the Countess of Cholmondeley they mutually expressed their dissatisfaction. The Prince, however, visited Windsor and Brighton with Mrs. Fitzherbert and Lady Jersey, and endeavoured to render himself happy and content. But the King reproached him for quitting a wife whom he had vowed to cherish, and expressed his desire for a reunion. This was now impossible. The Princess had too much feeling and independence to allow herself to be maligned and despised, without resenting it; and she intreated that, by some arrangement or understanding, she might enjoy the society and protection of her husband. To the Prince she wrote, but he did not attend to her remonstrances, but only directed the Countess Cholmondeley to suggest the propriety of a separation. At this idea the mind of the Princess at first revolted; she knew that it would lessen her dignity, degrade her character, disturb the happiness of her beloved parents, and be injurious to the future character of her child. Yet the Prince had frequently stated to her his dislike of her person, character, and society, and she did not therefore long feel that aversion to the measure, which she otherwise would. On receiving this communication, the Princess wrote to the Prince, requiring an explanation of his conduct, and representing the sources of their uneasiness and dissatisfaction; and to it she received a reply which was to her unsatisfactory. Windsor was now the residence of the Prince, and Carlton House of the Princess. Interviews but rarely occurred, and they often only tended to increase their mutual unhappiness.

In March, 1796, the propriety of a separation was again

represented to the Princess, and feeling that her situation could not be rendered more painful or degraded, she intimated to Lady Cholmondeley, that if she so separated *now*, at the request of the Prince, she would have it expressly understood, that in case of the death of the Princess Charlotte prior to herself and her father, she would not consent again to cohabit with the Prince, merely for the purpose of preserving the succession of that branch of the royal family to the crown. During the month of April, a further correspondence and conference took place, and at length the Princess requested that she might be definitely apprised of the wishes of the Prince of Wales; at the same time adding, that if it were possible, she would still be happy to reside with her husband, but that his conduct must be materially altered, to render her palace the abode of happiness or even peace. To the Prince she desired that her feelings and wishes might be communicated by Lord Cholmondeley. His lordship complied with her request, and he returned a reply that his Royal Highness thought an immediate separation had better take place, that in future they should each form their own arrangements, and neither of them be accountable to the other. With a verbal message on a subject of such great importance, the Princess was not content, and she required that she should receive from the Prince, in writing, his wishes and proposition, that she might be assured the communications she received were those of the Prince, and not of artful and designing individuals anxious to promote a separation, from personal and sordid motives.

With that request the Prince soon complied, and on April 30, 1796, he addressed to her the following letter:—

‘ Madam,

‘ As Lord Cholmondeley informs me that you wish I would define, in writing, the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavour to explain myself on that head with as much clearness, and with as much propriety as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other, because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power; let our intercourse, therefore, be restricted to that, and I will

distinctly subscribe to the condition which you required, through Lady Cholmondeley, that even in the event of any accident happening to my daughter, which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert, I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction by proposing, at any period, a connexion of a more particular nature. I shall now finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that, as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity.

‘ I am, Madam,

‘ With great truth, very sincerely yours,

‘ GEORGE P.’

‘ *Windsor Castle, April 30th, 1796.*’

This letter, about which so much has been said and written, was merely a link in the chain, though certainly one of considerable importance. That letter admits, first, That to the Princess of Wales he was not attached ; secondly, that he had no specific charge to bring against the conduct of her Royal Highness ; and thirdly, that a separation was essential to his happiness and tranquillity. By the letter, however, the Princess was surprised, agitated, and vexed. It was true, that of a separation they had often spoken, but when the event was presented to her in the light of reality and immediate occurrence, she was grieved and disappointed. The Princess hesitated, as to the course which it would be prudent for her to adopt, and accordingly, first determined on consulting her parents in Brunswick : but the time which would elapse, prior to receiving an answer, and all delays being improper, she resolved, at the advice of a particular friend, to consult the King, and to write a speedy answer to the Prince. To the Prince she accordingly communicated, in French, her reply to his letter, and to the translation of which particular attention should be paid.

‘ The avowal of your conversation with Lord Cholmondeley neither surprises nor offends me ; it merely confirmed what you have tacitly insinuated for this twelvemonth. But after this, it would be a want of delicacy, or rather an unworthy meanness in me, were I to complain of those conditions which you impose upon yourself.

‘ I should have returned no answer to your letter, if it had not been conceived in terms to make it doubtful whether this arrange-

ment proceeds from you or from me ; and you are aware that the honour of it belongs to you alone.

‘ The letter which you announce to me as the last, obliges me to communicate to the King, as to my sovereign and my father, both your avowal and my answer. You will find inclosed the copy of my letter to the King. I apprize you of it, that I may not incur the slightest reproach of duplicity from you. As I have at this moment no protector but his Majesty, I refer myself solely to him upon this subject ; and if my conduct meet his approbation, I shall be in some degree, at least, consoled. I retain every sentiment of gratitude for the situation in which I find myself, as Princess of Wales, enabled by your means to indulge in the free exercise of a virtue dear to my heart—I mean charity.

‘ It will be my duty, likewise, to act upon another motive—that of giving an example of patience, and resignation, under every trial.

‘ Do me the justice to believe, that I shall never cease to pray for your happiness, and to be,

‘ Your much devoted,

‘ May 6, 1796.’

‘ CAROLINE.’

Of the letter of the Prince, it has been said, that it is a ‘ Letter of Licence’ to the Princess, and to a certain extent, the title is applicable ; but still it was just such a letter as the previous conduct of the Prince should have induced her to expect ; and it was highly creditable to her character. It accused her of no crime—nor of any impropriety of conduct. The Prince could not, and did not love the Princess, and that was neither her fault nor his own. He admitted it. But then the question arises, whether, although he could not love her, yet as he had solemnly pledged himself to love and cherish her, he ought not to have abstained from those connexions with other individuals, which necessarily tended to increase as well as perpetuate those sentiments of indifference, and ultimately of dislike, which were entertained by the Prince. As to the propriety of such abstinence, there could not surely be any doubt, and it was all that was required by the Princess of Wales. Nor ought she to have desired more. The Prince she did not love, though she esteemed and honoured him, and she had, therefore, no right to expect from him feelings more ardent than her own ; but it did not follow that she should

expect, first, indifference, then dislike, and finally, persecution, from him to whom she looked up for protection. This letter tacitly admitted the correctness of her conduct. 'The inclinations of each other were not within their own power, nor should either of them be answerable to the other, because nature had not made them suitable to each other.' This was the alleged reason for the separation, and it was certainly the final reason; but had the Prince endeavoured to ascertain whether they were made so suitable? Certainly not. Before his future consort had visited England, an arrangement is stated to have been made with Lady Jersey: afterwards her scandal and reproaches were listened to, and retailed:—then the marriage-bed was forsaken:—Mrs. Fitzherbert was retaken under royal protection, and the Princess wholly discarded. Nor was this all; her enemies were placed as sentinels over her conduct, although the society and protection of her husband she did not enjoy; and she who was a foreigner, a Princess of Brunswick, an intelligent and accomplished female, was destined to live not merely in solitude, but in the midst of scandal and reproach.

On the receipt of the letter from the Prince, the Princess of Wales consulted with a political friend of his Royal Highness, as to the conduct she should adopt. He expressed himself surprised and grieved: but persuaded her immediately to consult her father and monarch, George III. Such advice harmonised with her own feelings; yet she expressed herself desirous to avoid distressing his mind and agitating his sensibility, by narrations which could not fail of producing dissatisfaction and unhappiness; but it was impossible. Lord Cholmondeley advised her, that a reconciliation appeared impracticable, since the feelings of the Prince were not the result of momentary displeasure, but of a long determined indifference, now amounting to dislike. He gave such opinion with his usual politeness and respect, and she felt that it was most likely to be correct. She then thought of returning to her father; but it was impossible so to act, without incurring the charge of impropriety of conduct; and, after much hesitation, she resolved on the letter which she sent, and determined on transmitting a copy to his Majesty.

The letter to the Prince she wrote in French; because she could correspond in that language with greater propriety and elegance; and a copy of such communication she sent with a letter to the King. His Majesty wrote to, and visited her. He deplored her situation, and endeavoured by every possible method to remedy the evils which he had been the unintentional instrument of producing. His son he could not reproach for not loving a woman whom he had married from policy; and his attachments to Lady Jersey and Mrs. Fitzherbert had been so frequently discussed and reprobated by him, that fresh animadversions were unnecessary. The Prince said, and wrote but little on the subject. Alienated from his wife, he yet respected the dignity of the Royal Family, and he supremely desired that privacy, as much as possible, should be preserved. In this respect all parties agreed, and the terms of separation now alone remained to be discussed. Concerning those arrangements some difference of opinion occurred. The King thought it was possible for a separation to take place without an actual change of residence, whilst the Prince and Princess were each favourable to a complete alteration. The King thought, that 20,000*l.* per annum should be allowed to the Princess for a separate maintenance; whilst she was advised to reject such income, and transmit periodically to the Prince her accounts for payment. To remedy the first difference, it was determined, that apartments should be reserved for her at Carlton House, which she might occasionally visit; and to remove any objections as to the plan of her proposed maintenance, she promised to be economical in her arrangements and retired in her habits.

For some time, however, after these arrangements were concluded, the Princess continued to reside at Carlton House, and the Prince at Windsor and Brighton; till, at length, she retired to Charlton, a small but beautiful village in the vicinity of London; where, in a comparatively humble abode, the Princess of Wales resided for two years. To that place her beloved child accompanied her, and Miss Garth, Miss Vernon, Mrs. Harcourt, and Mrs. Sander, with a few other ladies, formed her establishment.

The Princess of Wales was now apprized of the renewal of

the intimacy between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert, but to the latter she never communicated on the subject; yet in a memorable letter published at this time, and addressed to Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Prince, the writer has neither overstated, on the one hand, the intimacy of the Prince with her, nor, on the other, the feelings of dissatisfaction and disgust which it excited. In the letter to Mrs. Fitzherbert are the following energetic passages, evidently written under a strong impulse of resentment and indignation.

‘When the Prince of Wales was married to the Princess, it was agreed that you should retire from that intimacy of friendship you had so long enjoyed, and your houses in Pall Mall and at Brighton were given up accordingly.

‘However creditable, prospectively, to your character, that you did retire to the villa purchased for you at Castlebear, yet, viewed in a retrospective light, the necessity of such a retreat, accompanied as it was by a pension of several thousands per annum, payable quarterly at an eminent banker’s, and a retention of the very valuable plate, jewels, &c. given to you by the Prince, did not, in the opinion of the world, add much good fame to your reputation.

‘Had you continued in the retirement expected of you, the world would probably never have disturbed you in the enjoyment of your great possessions, by any reflections upon the mode of their acquisition; but not long after the Prince of Wales was married, his Royal Highness discontinued to live with the Princess, and returned to your society, in which he was eagerly received.

‘On this unexpected renewal of intimacy, an establishment upon a still larger scale was formed for you—a noble house in Park-lane, most magnificently fitted up, and superbly furnished—a large retinue of servants—carriages of various descriptions—a new pavilion, built for your separate residence at Brighton—and the Prince more frequently in your society than ever.

‘When, Madam, your friends pretend that your feelings are hurt, let me ask you and them, if you think the people or moral character in this country have no feelings? I am sure they must relinquish all claim to any, if they could view with

indifference such a departure from decency as this conduct exhibits in you, and not see, with anxiety and fear for the future, the probable result of such a dreadful infatuation, not less dangerous to the future interest of the country, than any that was ever experienced at the profligate court of Versailles.'

And in a letter to his Royal Highness, the same writer says, 'I shall not, however, Sir, so easily pass over your renewal of the connexion you had agreed to abandon with a lady, whose society, from her equivocal character, one part of the fashionable world thinks it their duty to avoid; while the other, more polite, in compliance with the expectation of your Royal Highness, as a tribute of respect to yourself, that the lady should be of every party where you are invited, sacrifice their sense of decorum to their vanity; while your Royal Highness, who can exact such a concession, as the price of your company, or tribute to your rank, does not manifest that regard to the opinion of the nation which they have a right to expect.

'The defiance to public opinion in the departure from decency which the conduct of the lady alluded to exhibits, since the marriage of your Royal Highness, is such as cannot be reprobated with too much severity, and is very justly appreciated by the public, by whom her name is never mentioned unaccompanied with expressions of the greatest contempt.

'The forlorn and hapless female, compelled to seek refuge from famine and despair in resources which her aching heart condemns, claims at once the pity and forgiveness of the world; but the female who, surrounded by affluence, prostitutes herself in the open face of day, ought to be pointed out as a public mark of infamy and vice.'

In regard to the conduct of Mrs. Fitzherbert, we must be allowed to express our opinion as in some measure coinciding with that of the writer of the letters from which the foregoing extracts have been taken: at the same time, it must be admitted, that it would have been expecting too much from her to have required that, when solicited by the Prince of Wales to renew their intimacy, and when visited by him, that she should refuse so to do. That the Prince required that Mrs. Fitzherbert should be one of every party to which he was invited is unde-

niably true; and that he quitted two parties where she was not so present, under evident signs of displeasure, is a notorious fact, and was much commented upon at the time, as a positive infraction of the common rules of propriety and decorum. It should also be taken into consideration, by those who view the conduct of Mrs. Fitzherbert at this time, as exhibiting some of the darker traits of female turpitude, that the relation in which that lady stood in regard to the Prince was one, perhaps, of the most extraordinary in which a woman was ever placed. She was conscious to herself that she possessed a prior claim to the hand and bed of his Royal Highness, and that she had been deprived of the one, and alienated from the other, by an act of mere state policy, which condemned him to the thralldom of a public marriage, which was repugnant to his own feelings, and to which his heart was most decidedly opposed. This, however, is the only palliation that can be advanced for the conduct of Mrs. Fitzherbert after the marriage of the Prince; for, after having formally consented to discontinue her intimacy with his Royal Highness, on certain *weighty* considerations, a renewal of that intimacy, after marriage, cannot be considered as agreeable to their propriety or principle.

It would not admit of the slightest doubt, that the conduct of his Royal Highness, and the open measures which he took to renew his connexion with Mrs. Fitzherbert, met with the most marked disapprobation and reprobation of the Princess of Wales. She expostulated, but all her expostulations were disregarded. Her disapprobation was ridiculed as foolish—her reprobation as wholly unworthy of notice. The argument that was used with her was, that ‘*you cannot expect that the Prince should renounce his friends, and absent himself from their society, merely because it has been deemed expedient by the country that he should marry you.*’ We do not attach a great value either to the head or the heart which could have invented, or made use of such an argument, to give a sanction to an open display of matrimonial infidelity, and a studied desire to wound the feelings of a wife, on those points on which she is generally the most susceptible; and yet this appeared to be the immediate study of the associates of the Prince of

Wales, for the express purpose of ultimately effecting a separation between himself and his much-injured wife. It was not, however, solely to Park-lane that the Princess of Wales looked for the infidelity of her illustrious husband, but certain scenes were actually carried on under the very roof of her own residence, that would have been more in character had they been enacted in the den of Circe, than in the palace of the heir-apparent to the British crown, and under the immediate observation of his legitimate wife.

We have no disposition to press heavily upon the character of any individual, especially that of a female, whose good name is the brightest gem in her dowry; but wherever we behold vice stand arrayed before us in all the plenitude of its atrocity, we then disregard all distinctions of person or of rank, and we will lash the thong of censure to its last thread, until ‘the galled *jade* is made to wince,’ and the deep scars of merited chastisement show themselves obtrusive to the gaze of an indignant public.

That the Prince of Wales soon lost sight of all observance of even the commonest principles of matrimonial attention, degenerating into positive insult to the feelings of a woman, who had as yet conducted herself with the utmost decorum and propriety, was a fact too well known by every inmate of Carlton House to be concealed long from the public, and loud and lasting were the deep expressions of the public indignation which burst from every quarter on the head of his Royal Highness. He was now marching at a rapid rate to that extreme verge of unpopularity which he soon afterwards reached, and which, but for the strong arm of power, would have shaken the peace of the country to its very base. Nor did the conduct of Queen Charlotte tend in any degree to appease the popular ferment. She even vindicated in the court circles the conduct of her son—expressed doubts as to the moral character of the Princess, to a member of the royal family now departed; and, instead of being anxious to hush the jarring elements of discord into peace, she only increased the dissatisfaction, and fanned the flame of personal dislike between the royal couple, by her most unwise and improper interference. The Princess of Wales, on the other hand, was,

perhaps, nearly equally faulty. She studied not to conceal her resentment and dislike. She paid a marked deference to the King and Queen. The former she caressed as a father, whilst the latter she received with all the stiffness and formality of court etiquette. That the Princess of Wales acted frequently with the utmost indiscretion and folly cannot for a moment be disputed, for to whom did she complain of the harsh and cruel treatment which she received?—not to those individuals who might possess not only the power but the inclination to redress her wrongs, but she denounced the conduct of her husband, and of her husband's mother, to the very individual who was then living under the same roof with her, as the mistress of her husband, and for whose removal from her household she had petitioned, but petitioned in vain. She made Lady Jersey the confidant of her sorrows—the depository of her grievances—and the treacherous creature immediately hastened to the Queen, and there disclosed that information which had been so thoughtlessly, and so imprudently, communicated to her, in the moments of unsuspecting confidence, and which was afterwards made use of in the most treacherous manner, as a part of the proofs of her immoral and immodest conduct.

Carlton House may be looked upon, at this time, as a Pandora's box, filled with treachery and vice. The immediate associates of the Prince, male and female, were persons distinguished for their immorality of conduct, their licentiousness and debauchery. Scenes of the most indecent nature were daily and nightly practised under its roof, which, as it was now the residence of a virtuous wife, and a mother, ought to have been uncontaminated by the presence of the harlot or the libertine. It was about this time that a character was introduced to Carlton House, admirably fitted for the performance of any act which required dexterity or deep finesse; and who, although originally a pauper of the very lowest cast, by his dexterous management of an intrigue, and jumping over a few punctilios, which the rigidly moral man would have declined overstepping at all, became, at last, the confidant of the heir-apparent to the crown, the distributor of

places and emoluments ; and, at the same time, as Tom Moore designated him, his ridicule and reticule.

We are aware that in the following exposure we shall call down upon our heads the indignation of the surviving members of the family of Sir John M'Mahon ; but, at the same time that we profess an esteem for that man who raises himself by his talents and an honourable course of action, from a menial situation to one of rank and emolument, with the same spirit do we deprecate that individual, who, crouching at the feet of his superiors, will lend himself to the commission of the meanest and the most disgraceful actions, for the sole purpose of his own personal aggrandizement. We should not, however, have deemed it necessary to enter into any detail of the birth, parentage, and conduct of the quondam privy-purse to the Prince of Wales, if it did not present an original picture of the state of society at that time, as far as influence and character extended, in the appointment of many of the principal officers who formed the household of the Prince of Wales. It was not talent, it was not an unsullied reputation, which then formed the stepping-stone to advancement, but the finished adept at an intrigue, the artful seducer of a wife's affections, or the husband who would leave his residence at one door, while a prince entered it at another, and absent himself for the night ; these were the men to whom the door of preferment stood open, on whom all honours and dignities were showered, as if reward were the concomitant of infamy, and emolument the attendant on vice.

The courts of most princes are the same, and the intrigues of courtiers operate and promote similar results. This may in a great measure be attributed to the leading principle, that the higher the power, the more stationary its action. While, therefore, civilization has progressed in almost an equal ratio with population, courts and courtiers do not keep pace with the improved intelligence of the age ; the former forming as it were a *terra incognita*, and the latter a distinct race of people, although of the same community and country, and subject to the same laws as society in general. This was peculiarly the case with the court of his late Majesty, to the very period

of his decease. The few persons called the King's private friends, such as the Duke of Devonshire, Earl Cowper, &c., were occasionally guests at the royal board, but were never consulted nor advised with. They had no political influence, nor desired any. Ductile as wax, they were impressed with the signet of majesty, and held in the same estimation as the autograph of the hand-writing on the wall, for their rarity ; or, like the gold plate of the household, only exhibited on extraordinary occasions, to give dignity to the presence of the King himself, or to add to the splendour of his hospitality. On all other occasions, the circle of the Prince of Wales, as well then as when he was King, was composed of persons raised by his bounty to the rank of companions—no matter by what nature of services that dignity had been obtained, or how far personal character had been injured or offended by them. Their dependency was assured on terms which declared their own baseness and meanness, and like satellites they revolved round the royal planet, but in no other atmosphere could their splendour be acknowledged.

On referring to the pages of history, and particularly to those which treat of the actions of the sovereigns of the earth, it will appear as an extraordinary fact, that their favourites have generally been chosen from the dregs of society, and that, in the majority of instances, their aggrandizement has been owing to their adroitness in intrigue, or to their total disregard of those solemn ties which are interwoven with the dearest affections of our nature, and by which the interests of society are held together. On the female side of favouritism, the aspect is, if possible, still more hideous ; for there it has generally risen from the very worst of passions, which to gratify, it would feed on offal. A Lanskoi, a Struensee, and a Godoy, were the selected favourites of crowned heads, and all of them born in the lowest grade of human society, yet all of them rising to the highest honours ; and although one of them forfeited his life on the scaffold, yet he once ruled the destinies of a nation ; and, but for the illicit affection of his Queen for him, would perhaps have lived to be the regenerator of his country.

We may be excused this digression, as being introductory

to a short biographical detail of the actions of an individual who was the confidant and the companion of the Prince of Wales, and who, we have reason to know, was deeper implicated in some of the amorous transactions of his Royal Highness, than any of his predecessors who held the same office. We could point to two ladies now living, the mothers of families, and moving in a most respectable station of life, who, but for the intriguing skill of John M'Mahon, would never have reposed in the arms of his Royal Highness; and we could point to another lady, in the person of Mrs. M'Mahon herself, to the effect of whose charms on the heart of the present most illustrious personage in the kingdom was solely owing the aggrandizement and elevation of her pliant and accommodating husband.

John M'Mahon, the companion of the Prince of Wales, was a natural son of John M'Mahon, butler in the family of the Right Honourable Mr. Clements, afterwards Lord Leitrim, of the Park, near Dublin. His mother was a chambermaid in the same family. At the age of nine, young John was taken into the same family, as kitchen-boy, to clean knives and boots. His father soon afterwards left the service of Mr. Clements, and opened an oyster-shop in Dublin, which gave him an opportunity of sending his son to school, where he made such rapid progress in his learning, that he was appointed one of the under ushers, at a salary of 10*l.* a year. His father afterwards married a Miss Stacpoole, of the county Clare, by whom he had two sons, the present Sir Thomas and Sir William M'Mahon; and at a future period, a very extraordinary difficulty arose in regard to there being two Johns in the same family, on which a bill in equity was filed in Dublin, in which John M'Mahon, the Privy Purse of the Prince of Wales, was made a party; and he was obliged to put in his answer, and to swear that he believed he was the natural son of John M'Mahon, and that his mother, the maid-servant, was never married to him, nor any one else.

John M'Mahon now obtained the situation of an exciseman; but finding the employment of measuring and gauging beer and whiskey rather dull and stupid, he formed an acquaintance with Mr. John Ferrar, the then proprietor of the Limerick

Chronicle, and a few other literary tradesmen, and they formed a debating society, each person to pay 6½*d.* admission fee. The novelty of the plan occasioned very crowded houses, and the projectors of it soon found themselves in possession of funds to the amount of 500*l.* The society, however, was not of long duration; and M'Mahon left Limerick for Dublin, where he was not very well received by his father, who procured him, however, the situation of a petty clerk in the Treasury, which he occupied for about two years; but being dismissed with disgrace, his father refused to interest himself any further about him, and being thrown upon the world, he joined a company of strolling players, with whom he remained about two years. One night, as he was acting the character of Scrub, in the *Beaux' Stratagem*, at Ennis, county Clare, he attracted the notice of Mr. William English, then well known by the cognomen of Buck English*, who being a man of gallantry, and excessively partial to the female sex, soon found in his new servant a most able coadjutor in his designs upon the wives and daughters of the gentry and peasantry in his neighbourhood. In one instance, however, although M'Mahon succeeded in obtaining the lady, it proved a dear bargain to his employer. This was the case of Mrs. Kissane, whose husband lived about a mile from the town of Tipperary. Mr. Kissane was a gentleman considerably advanced in years; his wife was young and beautiful, and therefore she became the object of English's desires, and M'Mahon was employed to carry on the intrigue. He succeeded so far as to conduct Mrs. Kissane to the spot where she was to meet Mr. English; but being observed by a man of the name of Shew, the latter placed a ladder at the window, and there saw sufficient to convict the parties of crim. con., and damages were awarded against Mr. English of 1500*l.*

* This English was one of the most extraordinary characters of the day. He acquired his property in a very singular manner, for his father, who was a day-labourer, being at work on the lands of Shoonhill, county Tipperary, then the property of the ancestors of the late Lady Caroline Damer, he found a large earthen vase filled with gold, that was supposed to have been hidden there upon the arrival of Oliver Cromwell at the siege of Clonmell. With this money, old William English purchased lands and houses, which at his death became the property of his son, William Alexander English, the patron of M'Mahon. He fought two duels, in both of which he killed his antagonist; and being once in England, he killed a waiter at an inn, and had him charged in the bill at 50*l.*

M'Mahon's stay under the roof of Mr. English was not of long duration, for one night the latter, being drunk, ordered M'Mahon to act the part of Scrub, for the entertainment of the company; but M'Mahon refused, on which Mr. English took up a stick, and laid M'Mahon prostrate on the ground; and if it had not been for the interference of Lieutenant Hiffernan of the 32d regiment, who was then commanding a recruiting party in the town of Tipperary, it is most probable that M'Mahon would not have lived to become the Privy Purse of the Prince of Wales. With a lacerated head, and the whole of his wardrobe, consisting of two shirts, a comb, a razor, and a pair of black breeches, he left the house of Mr. English: and the schoolboys of the town, Mr. Regan, Mr. Keating, and some other gentlemen, raised a subscription for him at one shilling each, and obtained for him a bed at the house of a poor widow of the name of Rose Burne, at the weekly rent of three shillings and sixpence; British, for the payment of which Lieutenant Hiffernan became security. When this worthy officer was obliged to leave the service, on account of ill health, and being considerably reduced in his circumstances, he sent the following curious bill to Lieutenant-Colonel M'Mahon, then an inmate of Carlton House; and it was delivered by Major Mansergh, of the 32d regiment, with the injunction on the part of Lieutenant Hiffernan not to declare the nature of the bill, as it might hurt the feelings of the favoured companion of the Prince. We have, however, obtained a copy of the bill; and it was not only discharged by M'Mahon, but three guineas were added to it, and he subsequently obtained an ensigncy for one of Hiffernan's sons. The bill was as follows:—

John M'Mahon Dr. to Thomas Hiffernan.

	£.	s.	d.
2d Jan. 1776. Paid Rose Burne for your lodgings,			
one fortnight	0	7	7
Paid T. Coney for dressing your hair, a			
fortnight	0	2	8½
Paid for your supper and whiskey	0	1	7½
Paid your washerwoman	0	2	2
Carried forward	0	14	1

		£.	s.	d.
	Brought forward	0	14	1
2d Jan. 1776.	Paid for a pair of shoes	0	5	5
	Paid William Makers, the tailor, for turning your coat	0	4	10½
	Paid for your supper and gin toddy	0	2	2
	Money lent	0	3	3
Feb. 2.	Paid for a pair of stockings	0	3	3
	Paid the tailor for mending and seating a pair of black breeches	0	1	9
	Paid for supper and grog at Read's Inn, Tipperary	0	2	2
	Paid for two cravats	0	4	4
	Paid for two pocket handkerchiefs	0	3	3
	Paid Rose Burne another week's lodging	0	3	9½
	Paid washerwoman	0	1	7½
	Paid T. Coney, hair-dresser, for a comb, powder, and pomatum	0	1	7½
	Paid supper and whiskey	0	2	2
	Paid for mending your shirts and stockings	0	1	7½
	Paid for covering your hat	0	1	3
	Paid another week's lodging to Rose Burne	0	3	9½
	Paid for two neck handkerchiefs, and two pocket handkerchiefs, at Reilly's, in Tipperary	0	6	10½
		£3	7	3½

On recovering from the wounds inflicted by the chastisement which Mr. English had given him, a subscription was set on foot for M'Mahon by some gentlemen in the town of Tipperary, and the sum obtained amounting to about 20*l.*, M'Mahon departed for Dublin, where he volunteered in a regiment, then on the eve of embarking for North America. Lord Rawdon, afterwards Earl Moira, was an officer in the same regiment, and he soon discovered M'Mahon's tact in intrigue; and being always found ready, on every occasion, to promote the designs of his lordship with particular ladies, and

especially with Mrs. Doyle, he was rewarded with an ensigncy, and subsequently he was appointed to the situation of deputy commissary. From the emoluments of this office he was enabled to purchase a lieutenancy and a company; and at the close of the American war, in 1783, M'Mahon returned to England, and settled at Bath, where he was introduced, by Captain Hazard, to a lady, whom he subsequently married, and settled at Ham Common, near Richmond. By accident, a certain illustrious individual, in one of his rides from Bushy Park, saw Mrs. M'Mahon, and became deeply enamoured of her; an acquaintance was formed; and the royal Duke was a frequent visiter at the cottage of M'Mahon; but it happened that whenever the Duke called, some urgent business required the attendance of M'Mahon in town, where he spent his evenings at the Cocoa Tree with Mr. Butler Danvers, Colonel Matthew, brother to Earl Landaff, and other gentlemen. By the interest of the Duke, M'Mahon was promoted to the brevet rank of major and lieutenant-colonel; and, subsequently, by the joint influence of his Royal Highness and Lord Moira, he was introduced to Carlton House, where, in a short time, he raised himself to be the companion and confidant of the heir-apparent to the throne.

We shall have again to refer to the actions of this man in some of the dark intrigues in which he was engaged on behalf of his royal master, but we have, in the foregoing sketch, exhibited an extraordinary picture of the mutability of human affairs in the life of an individual, commencing in the most abject poverty, and closing in affluence and rank. On his entering Carlton House, his income as a half-pay officer was only 60*l.* per annum, to which was added an annuity of 60*l.* by right of his wife; but he began to improve his finances, first by disposing of tickets at fifteen shillings and a pound each for viewing the interior of Carlton House; and, secondly, by procuring situations and titles, which were paid for according to the emolument to be received. In one instance, a gentleman applied to him to obtain a peerage for him, and 5000*l.* was offered. The offer was rejected, the sum was then doubled, and the peerage was obtained. When Lady M'Mahon was on her death-bed, she bade Sir John open a

a particular drawer, and in it he found, to his great astonishment, 14,000*l.* in Bank of England notes, obtained entirely by the exercise of her influence over some of the branches of the royal family, in the obtaining of commissions, and other appointments under government. In one instance, Robert Donkin, who was a lieutenant in the Supplementary Militia, gave Mrs. M'Mahon 120*l.* for an ensigny in the line. He was killed at the battle of Maida.

John M'Mahon was the principal agent in procuring Mrs. Jordan from Mr. Ford for the Duke of Clarence.

Good and bad seem to be blended together through all nature, and sometimes to be confounded with each other. In man there seem to be certain vices and virtues, which generally go together, and when we see, as we continually do, that some faulty characters please, and some virtuous characters displease, we ought to distinguish what *in particular* it is that pleases or displeases in them; and if we do, we shall find at least, we believe, much oftener than we are aware of, that the virtuous character displeases only in the vicious part, and the vicious character pleases only in the virtuous part. It must, indeed, be confessed, that some virtuous characters displease us more, upon the whole, than some vicious characters, but then it happens that the vice mingled in the virtuous character is of the most odious kind, for we are more offended with parsimony degenerated into avarice, than with liberality pushed on to profusion; and it should also be remembered, that there are some good and bad qualities which partake very little either of virtue or vice, and will yet almost obscure the one, and atone for the other.

But we have been told, that we are to regard the actions of the confidants of the Prince through a different medium to that of ordinary men, but we cannot discern where the distinction lies. We know of only one standard of right and wrong, and both are so fixed and determined in their principles, that that which is guilty in one individual cannot be innocent in another; the respective relations of the individual cannot possibly possess any influence on the *plus* or *minus* of moral turpitude which he might display, and the only excuse that can be offered for the display of any vice, which the

confidant of a prince may display, is, that he is not an independent agent, but that he is constrained to act according to the commands of his superior. The responsibility of the act rests on him who enjoins the commission of it, *qui fecit per alia, fecit per se*; and, in accordance with that principle, the onus of the many disgraceful acts which Sir John M'Mahon committed during the reign of his pursership, within and without the walls of Carlton House, must rest on the shoulders of the plotter and contriver of them, not on the executor.

It may be added, that the whole family of the M'Mahons have been ennobled by the influence which Sir John M'Mahon possessed with the Prince Regent. He succeeded in having his brother William made a serjeant of law in Ireland, and afterwards Master of the Rolls, to which a baronetcy was attached. His other brother, Thomas, a captain in the army, was, by the same interest, made Aid-de-camp to the Prince Regent, and raised to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. As Sir John M'Mahon knew he should not have any children, he succeeded, when a baronetcy was conferred upon him, for his *great and signal services*, in having the title to descend, at his decease, to his brother Thomas; and we believe both these baronets are now living.

From the private history of this prurient and parasitical courtier, we proceed to subjects of greater interest, and which possess a most decided influence on the general welfare of the country. The marriage of the Prince of Wales was soon followed by another of the male branches of the royal family, which, as connected with the succession to the crown, and bearing peculiarly upon the character, not only of George III., but of the illustrious subject of these memoirs, demands from us peculiar notice. We allude to the marriage of the Duke of Sussex with Lady Augusta Murray, the daughter of Lord Dunmore, at that time Governor of the Bahama Islands. It is not the least curious part in the history of the royal family of England, and especially of the Brunswick line, that almost all the members of it have been inclined to select their wives from amongst the commoners, on the fair and just principle, that an English prince should have an English wife. It assuredly was the baneful, narrow, and

immoral policy of contracting *state* marriages, which first warped, and ultimately shattered, the mind of George III. The father of that monarch, had he been left to follow his own free will, would have married a grand-daughter of the great Duke of Marlborough, and his son, George III., was deeply enamoured of Lady Sarah Lennox. State policy, wielded by an ambitious and haughty mother, interfered, and snapped asunder and uprooted that honourable attachment; and seeking in the petty courts of Germany for a consort, gave that first great shock to his feelings which led to deep and irreparable evils, not merely to the King, but to the nation; for, during various periods of longer and more frequent aberrations than his people knew of, the monarchical functions were exercised solely by his ministers, in concert, perhaps, with a Queen, amongst whose virtues any deep reverence towards the rights of the people was not numbered.

An honourable, although a mistaken, feeling of public duty had led George III. to relinquish his intention of marrying Lady Sarah Lennox, and acknowledging her as his Queen consort; and the same principle led him to wish to controul and guide his brother's choice; and what was the result? The deepest immorality, continual violations of the laws of hospitality, the seductions of the wives and daughters of the first of the English nobility; and it also led to the commission of *felony*, as well as to innumerable acts of *adultery*.

We may be considered as retrograding too far in entering on the amours of George III., for, to a casual observer, they may be supposed to have little or no reference to the immediate subject of these memoirs; but they will be found to be the foundation of those arbitrary and restrictive measures, which, in the subsequent marriages of the members of the royal family, and particularly in that of the Prince of Wales, were fraught with so much misery and danger to the vital interests of the country. Still there is something strongly paradoxical in the character of George III., who, being himself thwarted in his first and sincerest attachment, might be supposed to possess some sympathy with the other branches of his family, who, emancipating themselves from the tram-

mels of state policy, bestowed their affections on the daughters of our nobility, and even on commoners, but which they were constrained to smother, to make way for a spurious and bastard love for some ugly, stunted member of a German principality.

If we regard the Marriage Act as operating on the children of George III., in how terrible and awful a situation did that *policy* place the successor to the throne! What a dreadful train of variegated misery did it entail upon his beloved niece, the daughter of his eldest sister, whom he selected as a bride for his eldest son! The horrid and vile anomaly in British jurisprudence, the hateful Bill of Pains and Penalties, was its offspring, the effects of which no human eye can foresee, no human tongue can tell. The most prophetic vision, piercing the veil of futurity, catches but a partial glimpse of the evils with which that measure is accompanied, and which at, perhaps, no very distant period, may shake the dynasty of the Brunswicks to its very base. If we look to the succession to the throne, how dark and gloomy is the prospect in which the enactments of the Royal Marriage Act envelope the country! To this odious measure, contrary to the laws of nature and of God, we are now indebted for the most singular exhibition which the succession to the throne of this country now presents. We are at this time virtually without a heir-apparent, while the presumptive heiress is a princess, the daughter of the late Duke of Kent, and under twelve years of age. The Dukes of Cumberland and Cambridge have each a son, and the Duke of Sussex, by the operation of the Marriage Act, has been obliged to live single. The union between him and Lady Augusta Murray took place at Rome, and, on her becoming pregnant, they returned to England, and a second marriage took place in December, 1793, in the church of St. George, Hanover-square, according to the ceremonies of the Church of England.

The empty cry of the expediency of preserving the succession to the crown pure and unsullied was now set up, and George III., he, whose heart was still aching for the object of his first love, instituted a suit in the Arches Court of Canterbury, to annul the marriage of the Duke of Sussex; and it

was declared by that court, that not only the marriage in England was null and void, but that that which had been contracted in Italy was also illegal and invalid. Where then is the man, possessing common sense, who will dare to deny that it is not high time to abolish the Marriage Act, by which so much crime and misery have been engendered in the royal family, and by which the first and noblest of British women can attain no higher connexion with that family than to become a concubine to a British prince?

It is the sickening pride of the pauper princes of Germany, which has entailed so heavy a calamity on this country as the Marriage Act. In the case of the Prince of Wales, who actually came to the altar as a married man, and who, as such, forswore himself in the presence of his Creator, generations yet unborn may have reason to rue the day when that inauspicious union was consummated. It brought the country at one time to the verge of actual rebellion—private and public tranquillity was destroyed—the fame of England, which stood the brightest and the fairest in the estimation of foreign nations, was shorn of its splendour, and the remains of the last, and it may be said, the most ill-fated of England's queens, was huddled out of the country, amidst the din of arms, and cries of vengeance on the heads of her murderers.

It may not be unworthy of remark, that the objections to the marriages of our royal family with any of the branches of our nobility, has universally risen from the queen-consorts. In the case of Frederick, Prince of Wales, Horace Walpole asserts, in his 'Reminiscences,' that the day was actually fixed for his secret marriage with Lady Diana Spencer, at the lodge belonging to the Duchess of Marlborough, in Windsor Great Park; and Sir Levett Hanson, so late as 1808, affirmed, that he was assured by a gentleman, who belonged to the Prince's household, that Frederick Prince of Wales used often to tell Prince George, that as he was an English boy, he should, if he pleased, have an English wife; observing, that by continually intermarrying with German women, the royal family would continue for ever germanized, and distinct from the nation they governed. When it was urged by his courtiers that such marriages might prove prejudicial to the state,

by conferring too great an ascendancy upon particular families, and thereby create jealousies and ill blood; he would reply in a jocular way by saying, he should have girls and boys enough to connect the crown by blood with so *many* families that no such danger could arise, and he would never force his sons or daughters to marry, adding, if they should like the Germans best, let them take their choice; but I would rather that they should all marry into English families, and then their descendants would be of British blood as well as Britons born. His consort, however, having been reared in the petty court of Saxe Gotha, where the *people* and the *cattle* were held in about equal estimation, and expected silently and submissively to yield to every mandate, heard with surprise and indignation these alarming doctrines, and energetically affirmed, that if she had power to prevent it, never should a child of her's marry into an English family. The sentiments expressed by the father, at a later period of his life, sunk deep into the mind of his son George, and when, in 1756, his grandfather thought of marrying him to a princess of Brunswick, he expressed to his mother his strong aversion to the marriage, who, having other views, supported her son's determination without saying *why*, and there ended the incipient project.

If we look to George III. before he had attained the age of twenty-one, he had secretly made up his mind to adopt his father's maxims, and select an English woman to share, as his consort, the English throne. His affections, as it is well known, settled upon Lady Sarah Lennox. The enamoured youth was not slow in finding means to let the noble young damsel know of the pure and ardent affection his heart cherished towards her, and if she deigned to listen to his suit, it was his intention, if he lived to ascend the throne, that she should share it with him. With a frankness of heart, which reflects honour upon her memory, the amiable girl freely acknowledged, that had the rank of her lover been as far below her's as it was above, she could have met his advances without doing violence to her feelings, but as the case stood, after having gratefully and humbly thanked the Prince for the proud distinction he had bestowed, and wishing him every

happiness, she informed him she dared not act otherwise than decline his flattering offer. Having fully made up his mind on the subject, this graceful denial only fanned the intense passion he felt, and which, perhaps, he did not wish to controul; and so powerful were its effects, that it wrought a sudden and marked change in his pursuits. His dogs, his horses, his field sports, were for a time wholly neglected, till upon the reiterated assurances of the resolution he had long formed of marrying a British lady, and that he would rather relinquish the throne than his hope of obtaining her for his bride, she cancelled the negative previously given, and they interchanged vows of love and constancy. Thus when his mind was released from the racking anguish of suspense, and he was received as a favoured lover, the youthful Prince resumed his former sports, though with diminished ardour, for the fair Lennox revelled in his virtuous bosom the queen of his soul—the sole object of his youthful love.

Sir Levett Hanson speaks of these interesting court anecdotes as sober facts, and he smiled at the idea that the reigning family could have been disgraced by the heir-apparent marrying the daughter of an English peer; whilst in the most full and positive terms he affirmed, that the Duke of Richmond, her father, had no knowledge of, nor participation in this amour; stating that a cousin of her mother's was governess to Lady Sarah, and also her confidant; and that her conduct was marked by the strictest propriety and decorum in every stage of the transaction, when her hopes were lifted high, and an imperial crown seemed impending over her head, and when by a cruel reverse the flattering prospect suddenly vanished, and love was made an offering to state policy.

Beset on every side with interested observers, it must have been a matter of great difficulty for the Prince to have carried on this intercourse undiscovered; yet this was accomplished through the medium of his brother Edward, and the lovers frequently met at the country seat of a lady of rank, which stood in the track of the Prince's rustic excursions. During these stolen interviews, which could not last long, the lover acquainted his intended bride that he neither had

nor should consult any of his courtiers; but, deferring the marriage until he had ascended the throne, he would plead his father's promise—claim his natural right to select his partner for life—and throw himself upon the generosity of his people for support and approbation*.

We may be considered as digressing from the avowed subject of these memoirs in thus entering into the particulars of the amour of George III.; but, in the first place, they are not generally known, and, in the second, they serve to complete the odious picture of the impolicy of state marriages, and the baneful consequences which result from them to the general interests of the country. The marriage of the Prince of Wales with Caroline of Brunswick may be regarded as the apex of this unnatural system; and the exposition of the evils with which such marriages are accompanied may sooner or later be the means of attracting the notice of the legislature, and the result may be the abolition of an act which now stands as a disgrace in the archives of one of the most liberal and enlightened nations of the world.

The chief household spy of the Princess Dowager of Wales was Mr. Creset, who was also her private secretary; and he was the person who, suspecting Prince George's visits to the Countess of ——— were connected with some intrigue, had the credit of having discovered the amatory intercourse and correspondence which, before he reflected how much better a hand of that discovery he might have made by concealing it from all except the lovers, he babbled out to his inquisitive mistress. The Princess Dowager was affected by this discovery no less powerfully than if she had been apprized of the sudden death of her eldest son. She had been for some time suspicious that the Prince was deeply engaged in an amour, but her pride repelled the idea that he had already plighted his faith to raise an English lady to be the partner of his throne. Rage—indignation—scorn—dismay—each by

* Connected with this amour of his father for Lady Sarah Lennox is a witticism of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who, on being informed that his father, whilst perambulating one of his farms in the vicinity of Windsor Great Park, had been pursued by one of the oxen which were grazing in the fields, 'I am sorry for it,' said the Prince; 'but it is not the first time that my father has been in danger from a *Lean ox*.'

turns assailed her agitated bosom, yet her usual caution did not forsake her; and though constrained forbearance cost her a severe pang, the Princess despatched Creset to summon the Earl of Bute to her presence, before she ventured upon any attempt to avert a blow alike fatal to all her ambitious projects, and intolerably humiliating to her haughty mind.

Lord Bute was scarcely less surprised than the Princess, nor less alarmed. He saw all the dangers which surrounded them, and taught the mother, bursting with passion, the necessity of subduing her feelings, and having recourse to *sap* and *mine* to effect that purpose for which he expressed his fullest confidence that all angry remonstrance would utterly fail. Convinced by his reasoning, and from habit submissive to opinions so gracefully and eloquently expressed, the Princess yielded to his better counsels, nothing doubting his fidelity or discretion; and thus, whilst the youthful lovers, lulled in a false security, enjoyed their present happiness, and confidently looked forward to a prosperous issue to their virtuous wishes, silently but rapidly were the elements of that storm accumulating, which was destined to sever their fond hearts, and annihilate every enraptured vision of future bliss in which they were indulging.

Never at a loss for expedients to bring about any greatly desired end, the Earl of Bute called into action a few selected noblemen and ladies upon whose prudence he could rely, to whom, partially and cautiously, he explained the uneasiness of the Princess Dowager, on account of her eldest son's devotion to Lady Sarah Lennox, and her maternal fears lest the amour should end in the dishonour of the young damsel; not once alluding to the Prince having pledged his faith to the fair object of his love, and destined her to be his consort, from the fear that it should counteract their own projects, and raise up auxiliaries for the lovers where she hoped to create enemies.

It may be necessary to carry in remembrance the leading points of this amour, in order properly to understand the import of many passages in the dialogue between the Prince of Wales and his illustrious father, inserted in a subsequent part of this work, and which has been obtained by the

kindness of a gentleman who was at the time secretary to the Earl of Moira, who was himself present at the royal interview.

To the credit of the Prince and his beloved, so great had been their discretion and self-command, that no one, except the few already alluded to, had the least idea of their innocent amour. At the instigation of the Earl of Bute, the Duke of Richmond was suddenly visited by a succession of noble guests, whose presence occupied too much of Lady Sarah's time to permit of her meeting her royal lover as usual. Their intercourse was, in consequence, epistolary; and as neither of them had the smallest mistrust that their secret passion was known to the Princess, they consoled each other in the pleasing illusion that the time for secrecy and constraint would shortly terminate. But when visit after visit was proposed, and Lady Sarah found herself insensibly, as it were, removed farther and farther from her lover, dark fears unbidden obtruded on her mind; and although she could not perceive any visible traces of remote agency or secret management, yet the result of the different domestic movements alarmed her fears, and suggested danger, without affording any clue to its source, or any means of prevention.

During this period, the lovers were almost wholly debarred from correspondence; and by comparing dates, it seems, from the recollections of men of ancient days, who were then in the service of the royal family, that the Prince was remarkably dejected, neglected his favourite animals, and his rural sports, and sought out solitudes, wherein perhaps to give greater scope to his perturbed feelings unobserved.

Sir Levett Hanson stated that neither the Princess nor Lord Bute thought it advisable to intercept the letters which passed between the lovers. 'It was not,' said he, 'any sentiment of delicacy by which they were deterred, but the dread of irreparably offending the noble-minded youth, and hurrying him to the consummation of the marriage they wrought so earnestly to avert.' Such was the state of affairs when the death of George II. took place, soon after which event, various of his ministers and councillors strongly urged the young monarch to take a consort; but neither his mother nor the Earl of

Bute were foremost to recommend this measure. Finding himself thus pressed, the King mentioned his father's promise to Lord Bute, and asked him if he conceived any serious injury was likely to accrue to the state if he were to act as his parent had advised, and take an English lady for his bride? The dissembler appeared as if suddenly overwhelmed by the deepest grief and surprise. After a solemn pause, he told his Sovereign, except a recantation of his faith, he could not call to mind any act so full of disastrous consequences as that to which he had alluded. Impatient of further dissimulation, the King communicated to the Earl the deep affection he cherished towards Lady Sarah Lennox, the solemn engagements into which he had entered, and his fixed determination to exercise that natural right which the meanest of his subjects possessed, and select his wife himself.

The cautious politician saw clearly that everything might be lost by ill-timed opposition; and finding that, piqued at the long-continued silence of Lady Sarah, the King had not taken any decisive step since the death of the old King, all he ventured to ask of the young monarch was, to pause a given time before he committed himself irrevocably; protesting with many well-dissembled tokens of affectionate zeal, that if, at the end of that period, his Majesty's will should remain the same, that he should use all his interest to soothe the public mind, and prepare his mother for a stroke which he pretended might break her heart. This was touching a chord that vibrated through every nerve: the young Prince turned pale, and said, 'It is a sad alternative in which I am placed; the crown is not worth the sacrifice I am called upon to make. You say my mother's heart will break if I marry Lady Lennox; and so intensely do I love that lady, Sir, that I fear my mind would not be able to bear up against the shock of the disappointment. My mother's aversion is not rational, and I do not perceive that she ought to require the sacrifice at my hands.' As he spoke, his voice faltered and tears trickled down his cheeks. At last, the distressed lover gave his word as required, and, during that interval, the pathetic entreaties and admonitions of the Princess Dowager, powerfully backed by the

sedate and dignified expostulations of Lord Bute, developing, according to old state maxims, the necessity there was, if he aimed at the conscientious discharge of his public duty, as a wise and virtuous monarch, to sacrifice his passions to the safety of his empire, induced him to waver; and then his mother and his private monitor made such forcible appeals to his pride and generosity, that the young Prince, agreeing to be guided by their counsels, gave them his word of honour, that, whatever it might cost him, he would make the sacrifice required. He kept that word, although his heart was wrung with anguish. He passed, as it was said, a week in solitude, striving to master his feelings and yield up his love. The letter he wrote to Lady Sarah Lennox was represented by Sir Levett Hanson as teeming with the finest touches of passion. He candidly stated all that had occurred, and assured her that no considerations whatever had the least influence upon his decision, except his sense of public duty, and his moral conviction that, however painful the sacrifice demanded, it would be dishonourable in him to hesitate. In the interval, Lady Sarah's confidential friend, a maternal relation to Sir Levett, either by design or chance, obtained possession of the letter written by Lord Bute, the contents of which, though guardedly composed, and the meaning obscurely expressed, gave the innocent victim of his machinations a full comprehension of the whole scheme. The shock was great, but a greater yet remained. This was the affecting letter alluded to, written by the King, and sent to her by a gentleman of his court, on whose honour and delicacy he relied. Although the blow was tempered by all that was tender and affectionate in language, and noble in sentiment, and offered a brother's love, where her fondest wishes yet combined with her undoubted claims, it still fell dreadfully heavy. The health of the amiable girl sunk under the pressure, but time and reflection had their usual influence; and after a few months' seclusion, Lady Sarah Lennox was able, not only to forgive the King, but even to assist at his marriage with another; not so regarding Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager, towards whom she felt the most intense hatred. The impression produced on the mind of

the King was answerable to the greatness of the love he had cherished towards her, and gave new poignancy to his sorrows.

Infinitely to the credit of Lady Lennox, although she had detected the secret agency of Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager, she concealed her knowledge of their delinquency, that she might not wound the bosom of her royal lover, whom she resigned in a manner becoming a woman worthy to have been his bride. After the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales, the veil was withdrawn, and the whole of the secret machinery exposed by which the projected marriage had been prevented.

Such was the account given by Sir Levett Hanson of the deep-rooted attachment of the King; to the disappointment of which passion he attributed, not only the partial flashes of disordered intellect, which in less than a year after his marriage are said to have been perceptible to the Queen, and his nearest attendants; but also that profound piety, and unfeigned reliance on the consolations of religion, by which he was henceforth so eminently distinguished.

To revert briefly to the consequences which may arise to this country from the marriage of the Duke of Sussex, the most important circumstance is the eventual separation of the crown of Hanover from that of England; for although the marriage was declared illegal by the laws of England, it is not considered so by the laws of Hanover; and, consequently, it is not improbable that the crown of that kingdom may, at no very distant day, devolve upon Augustus d'Este, the son of the Duke of Sussex; and should that event take place, the separation of the two crowns may be considered as final.

We are now about to enter upon the recital of one of the most extraordinary transactions which marked the present era, and the whole of which had its foundation in the pecuniary embarrassments of the Prince of Wales and Lord Moira. It forms one of the most striking incidents in the life of his Royal Highness, that during the time when he was Regent of the country, a naval officer, who is an ornament to his country and to his profession, was prosecuted and punished for the commission of an act of which the Prince himself, though not

overtly, and one of his ministers, had actually been guilty, for the express purpose of providing for those exigencies which the extravagance and profusion of a court had caused. At the time of its occurrence various versions were given of the transaction, according to the political bias, or the prejudices of the individuals, but the materials have been furnished to us exclusively, by which we are enabled to clear up the mystery in which it has hitherto been enveloped, and to represent the affair in its genuine colours, without regard to the noble individuals whom it may impeach, or the stain which it may leave upon their character.

In order, however, fully to detail the transaction, and to render it a connected narrative, it will be necessary to take a view of the ministry as it stood in the year 1806, although the circumstances originally took place about the period of which we are now writing, in the year 1796, and were in operation as long as Lord Moira remained in office.

The accession of Mr. Fox to power, in the year 1806, after so long an interval of ministerial duties, brought on a coalition of interests between him and many members of the then recent administration, of which, previously to his death, Mr. Pitt was the head. Lord Grenville became First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Moira, Master-General of the Ordnance, and Mr. Fox, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The first act of the new administration was to open a negotiation with France, the present ambassador now in England, Talleyrand, enjoying the same station under Napoleon Buonaparte as Mr. Fox in England. Lord Lauderdale, who had always adhered to the Whigs, and manifested what would be now called ultra-liberal principles, was sent to Paris as the plenipotentiary on behalf of England, and continued to conduct a vacillating negotiation until it terminated in complete failure.

During the progress of this negotiation, the fluctuation in the funds indicated that some parties were concerned in the operations, who must have had access to sources of information of an exclusive nature; and at last the indiscretion of these parties proceeded so far as to whisper the name of Lord Moira, a cabinet minister, as the party on whose authority

these transactions rested. Mr. H——, a banker at the west end of the town, Messrs. I. and H., of the Stock Exchange, and Messrs. Walsh and Nesbitt, with Mr. M——, then a banker in Lombard-street, were pretended to be, and actually were, in communication with St. James' Place, directly or indirectly, where Lord Moira resided. It was also generally asserted, that the Prince of Wales, who had previously contracted the most serious obligations to Lord Moira, was indirectly cognizant of the speculations, and gave them his sanction as a source to enable Lord Moira to provide for the exigencies for which they were naturally bound to provide. It was also found, on referring to the several stages of the negotiation, and comparing the several documents laid before parliament, that the changes and fluctuations in the prices of the funds, for a rise or a fall, corresponded with the date of good or ill news, as traceable in the government despatches.

For a long time, however, previously to this period, that is about the year 1796, the connexion of Lord Moira with the pecuniary distresses of the Prince was publicly known, by the attempts of his lordship to raise money on his own security, and that of his agents, for the accommodation of his Royal Highness; wherever a channel presented itself by which an instantaneous supply could be obtained, it was immediately taken advantage of, no matter how high or exorbitant were the terms which were asked. For a long time the fact was well known, that the credit of Carlton House was reduced to the lowest ebb, and that Lord Moira's paper was at such a ruinous discount, as must have exhausted and absorbed the revenues of an empire. If two hundred pounds could be obtained upon a bill of one thousand, and the remainder in a mass of useless lumber, which was again disposed of at a loss of three or four hundred per cent.—it was greedily snapped at, and, in many instances, the bills coming due, were renewed at a similarly ruinous rate. However, the favour of the Prince, the hopes of his succession to power, the urbanity of the noble lord himself, and the facile nature of his temper, formed a combination around him of the ambitious and the selfish, and all the parasites who administer to the wants and cravings of an

inordinate court, for the purpose of supporting his pecuniary views, especially as they were well aware, that although the sums required were ostensibly for the use of Lord Moira, yet that they were in reality destined to relieve the Prince of Wales from the pressing embarrassments which every day thickened upon him. Thus, on one occasion, Walsh and Nesbitt advanced Lord Moira 5000*l.*, and bankers and speculators of all descriptions pawned their credit to preserve and supply the influence and wants of a court, which subsisted by no other means than what such persons could raise at an extravagant interest, and which ended in the ruin of many of them, and in one instance of the most deliberate suicide. The latter was the case with the Reverend George Henry Glass, a man of voluptuous habits, of considerable talents and address, and, we believe, one of the chaplains of the Prince of Wales. He was rector of Hanwell in Middlesex, and, setting aside his clerical character, a fitter person, perhaps, could not have been selected to carry on the pecuniary negotiations of the Prince and his co-equal, Lord Moira, in extravagance and thoughtlessness. Mr. Glass became one of the most responsible agents of Lord Moira in the city; through him new channels of accommodation were opened, a variety of speculations were entered into, some of which succeeded, and enabled the besieged party in Carlton House to hold out against the attacks of the infuriated creditors, by paying a small portion of their demands, with positive promises, that ere long the whole should be liquidated.

It was the sagacity of Mr. Charles (to whom we acknowledge our obligations for the particulars of these transactions, which have never before been presented to the public eye) or rather his attachment to Mr. Fox, that exposed and overthrew all that might have been anticipated from some of the intrigues which were then carrying on, in which principle and honour had no share, and which went to undermine the credit and respectability of the first commercial establishment in the world.

Mr. Charles was at that time a clerk in the Bank, and the principal in a considerable mercantile establishment in the Old Jewry. He had for a long time observed the operations

which were carrying on in the funds, and he communicated to several of his private friends his opinion of those transactions. The parties known to belong to the junta of Carlton House were regarded as the barometer of the value of the funds; and so correct in general was their information of those events which might occasion a rise or fall, that a suspicion was entertained that such information could only be acquired from one in the immediate confidence of government, and their motions were subsequently narrowly watched by all those speculators who deal in time bargains, and who are always on the alert to take advantage of any fluctuation in the public securities. Thus, when the persons in immediate communication with Lord Moira found themselves baffled by the adverse progress of the negotiations at Paris, they endeavoured to support their falling credit with the name of that nobleman. The fact of the speculation in the funds was reiterated by Mr. M——, the banker in Lombard-street; and, at last, it became so public, that the Whig party of the administration was openly charged by the press as betraying the secrets of government for corrupt and personal advantages. The known attachment of Mr. Charles to Mr. Fox's principles no longer permitted him to conceal his disgust, and a private communication was made to that minister, at the moment when the disorders of his constitution began to prognosticate that disease, which shortly afterwards consigned him, with an imperishable name, to the records of a nation's veneration.

In consequence of the critical situation of Mr. Fox, Sir Francis Vincent, his private secretary, transferred the letter which Mr. Charles had written to Mr. Fox into the hands of Lord Grenville, who, on the receipt of it, sent for Mr. Charles to Downing-street, where an interview took place in the presence of Lord Spencer. At this meeting, Mr. Charles, by the advice of Mr. Const, the present Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for Middlesex, declined to communicate in the presence of a third person, when he was assured by Lord Grenville that Earl Spencer was only called upon to be present, so that Lord Moira might be satisfied with the proceedings which might take place during the meeting; but the *fiat justitia* wanted the *ruat in cælum*, and Mr. Charles was brought to

trial on the joint affidavit of the two noble Lords, for a gross and unwarrantable libel.

If any event could prove the divided state of the cabinet, and the intrigues of the Tories connected with, or employed by, the administration, this case would settle the dispute; for, as to the incident in itself, obscure as the individual concerned in the charge may be, and slight as the imputation upon Lord Moira may be, to whom a guilty participation in the alleged transactions was never imputed, yet the charge, in the hands of the Tory portion of the administration, was vituperated by the then organ of government, the *Times* newspaper—the conversation which took place in private in part disclosed, and the contents of the letter itself published, though held by the two ministers present, Lords Grenville and Spencer, as without prejudice, a confidential communication between the individuals named. Lord Moira, of course, had no alternative but to proceed with the prosecution, or lose his seat in the cabinet.

No doubt can exist of the motives which influenced these disclosures, after the understanding between Mr. Charles and the noble Lords alluded to; and, in fact, Lord Grenville, during the several interviews which took place on the subject, made a great parade of his impartiality, and of his reluctance to proceed against the writer of the letter, who, in his turn, made the most frank communication of all he knew of the affair, without concealing the slightest circumstance which could fix the blame on the proper shoulders, rather desiring the acquittal of Lord Moira than his condemnation. Mr. Charles was, however, advised to defend the action by those who knew the accuracy of his information, and for some time he considered that no further notice would be taken of it in a legal sense. He was, however, ultimately indicted for the libel; and the law officers of the crown, Sir Vicary Gibbs and Sir William Garrow, then Attorney and Solicitor-General, conducted the prosecution, ex officio, against him.

Nothing more strongly developes the nature of ministerial responsibility than this prosecution; nothing exposes more fully the secret constructions of a cabinet not actually agreeable to the Crown. For many years Mr. Fox had been a stranger to office; on the death, and, it is believed, on the

recommendation of Mr. Pitt, he was called into power, and office was divided, so as to balance the opinions of men who could only conduct the business of the nation to any advantage by a cordial and zealous co-operation with each other. Such, however, were the difficulties felt on the first formation of this administration, that an expedient was hit upon which compromised the principles of Mr. Fox, by the introduction of Lord Ellenborough into that cabinet, as a legal arbitrator of political differences ; and it was by his direction that the prosecution against Mr. Charles was undertaken.

It appears, however, that a fresh light broke on a sudden on the minds of the projectors of this prosecution ; and it was strongly suspected that it came from the 'rising sun,' as some very well-founded fears were entertained in that quarter that, in the course of the trial, certain matters might be disclosed which would not contribute to conciliate the affections of the English people, whose minds were already inflamed with reports of certain proceedings at Carlton House, in respect to the Princess of Wales and *other ladies* connected with that establishment ; and therefore it was wisely considered that the times were by no means auspicious for any public proceedings which had any reference to the affairs of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the public having twice paid his debts, and still found him in a state of comparative insolvency. A few days before the trial was to come on, the proceedings were arranged with Mr. Charles by Messrs. Lowden and Peyter, of Gray's Inn—judgment was suffered to go by default—and the whole affair was settled in court, on Mr. Charles entering into his own recognizance, the same having been previously adjusted at Sir William Garrow's, in the presence of Lord Moira, who then frankly confessed the dangerous conspiracy of professed friends, and complimented Mr. Charles on the honourable frankness which he had evinced through the whole of this delicate affair. 'Certainly,' said Sir William Garrow, 'the conduct of Mr. Charles has been very rash ; but the discoveries which you have made will operate to the renunciation of such agencies in future, which have led your Lordship into your present difficulties.'

It is, however, melancholy to reflect that this advice was thrown away upon his Lordship. A most extraordinary degree of infatuation appeared to have taken possession of his mind, and his unhappy attachment to the Prince of Wales only led him into further errors, as in the case of the Queen, from the public obloquy of which he was only rescued by the gift of the most splendid government belonging to the Crown; but which, so far from liberating him from his pecuniary embarrassments, contributed to augment them—which afterwards involved him with the Messrs. Palmer—suspended the usual pension at the India House—and sent him almost as an exile from his country, to die at Malta, leaving a name endeared to all the social virtues, to the malignity of his enemies, and which even the courage and generosity of friends could not re-establish.

Perhaps there was no monarch to whom the Prince of Wales bore a stronger resemblance than to Louis XV. of France. He had his *parc aux cerfs*, of which Madame Maintenon was the ranger, with a number of other inferior beauties, to gratify the passions of the amorous monarch. Our George IV. was less a sensualist than a voluptuary, although his appetite for a variety of women was equally boundless and extravagant. In France it was the fashion of the courtiers to supply the royal harem with their own children, in order to vary the pleasures of the monarch. In England it had been the custom to ransack the abodes of indigent virtue for victims, or to corrupt the confidence of wedded life, to administer to the licentious pleasures of the king. In France the vices of the court were disciplined by the craft of the priest, and the hypocrisy of the devotee; in England the creatures of the court toiled in their nefarious occupations, and boasted publicly of their success over the innocent, the gay, and the unsuspecting, whom they had hunted into their snares. These persons, composed of parasites, discarded mistresses, and candidates for court favour, had their several rendezvous and disguises, to fascinate, deceive, and allure the unwary. All the obligations of morality were relaxed or broken down by the example of the court and the licentiousness of

its followers; the throne was surrounded by courtesans and flatterers, and access denied to all without the sanction of the favourite concubine of the day.

The decorum and modesty of the court of George III. formed a melancholy contrast with the splendour and debauchery of his son's. The veil which concealed the domestic misfortunes of that amiable man—which impregnated no atmosphere but his own, was rudely drawn aside to inquire out the causes of his mental calamity and dejection, in the midst of an apparently innocent family. But the conduct of the Prince matured, unsatisfactorily, the power of the King, who adopted undisguisedly the political and moral principles of the worst sovereigns of the House of Capet. Thence seduction was conducted systematically by agents, both male and female, instructed and trained for the purpose; and of such various ranks and grades as might obtain for them an introduction to every family, high or low, public or private, where a beautiful victim presented herself, or where the sacred ties of matrimony could be broken, by estranging the wife from the affection of her husband, and leading her into scenes where her ruin was to be accomplished.

The following will show that the portrait which we have drawn of the vice and licentiousness of the court of Carlton House is not too highly coloured, and it must be a subject of deep regret to those who are acquainted with the powerful effect which example possesses over the morality of society in general, that the very highest personages in the realm should, in their conduct, have exhibited a depth of depravity unparalleled, perhaps, in any ancient or modern court of Europe.

It was about this time that Miss Bolton became a public favourite, and, as usual with persons on the stage, she attracted the attention of some young men of fashion, nor was the Prince of Wales indifferent to that interesting naïveté which was the peculiar characteristic of her acting. Miss Bolton was, however, too well guarded by her respectable mother, and too serious and circumspect in her own deportment, to run into the snare which was laid for her. The usual prelude to negotiations of this nature, such as presents of diamond necklaces, was punctually adhered to in this in-

stance, but it failed of the desired effect ; for every act that was committed, which appeared to have the slightest reference to the conquest of her virtue, was repulsed with an indignation which would have deterred the majority of individuals from proceeding any further in the attempt, and have induced them to relinquish it as a hopeless task. Not so, however, the panders of the Prince of Wales—with every rebuff—with every indication of the most determined spirit to repel all their attempts—their exertions appeared to increase—their plans were distinguished by deeper stratagem and artifice—their whole conduct more strongly marked by an apparent acquiescence to her will, at the same time that they were concocting their diabolical schemes, by which this amiable girl was to be numbered amongst those unfortunate victims who had already fallen a prey to the inordinate appetite of his passions. It would scarcely be deemed credible, that the human mind could exhibit such an extraordinary degree of ingenuity in the devising of a scheme for the accomplishment of the ruin of female virtue, as was displayed in this instance ; and strong and firm, indeed, must have been that virtue which could have escaped uninjured through so severe an ordeal, in the progress of which libertinism assumed the mask of philanthropy and humanity, and treachery put on the garb of friendship and disinterestedness. Whatever part the male panders of the Prince may have acted in this affair, it was no more than could be expected from the base servility of their characters, and their total disregard for every tie of morality and virtue ; but that beings could be found, calling themselves women, and bearing the honourable title of wives and mothers, to aid and abet the infamous seducers in their designs, is a foul blot in human nature, and makes the heart sicken with hatred and disgust whenever their names are mentioned.

The theatrical talents of Miss Bolton, her graceful and elegant person, and, above all, the high character which she enjoyed of an unsullied reputation, so rare and difficult to obtain and maintain in the profession which Miss Bolton had adopted, acquired for her the estimation of many good and worthy people, who watched over her with that affection and care which the preservation of her virtue demanded, and on

which they well knew the success of her future prospects in life depended. It required a dragon to watch the Hesperian fruit, but it was lulled to sleep, and the fruit was gathered; and to that Providence which in an unexpected moment sends the wished-for relief, must be attributed the salvation of Miss Bolton from the ruin which awaited her.

Having obtained a temporary engagement from the manager of the Windsor theatre, Miss Bolton repaired to that place; and amongst the many aspirants for her acquaintance, was a Mrs. Hall, or rather the *chère amie* of Mr. Sykes, but then the reputed wife of Captain P——. Miss Bolton was a total stranger to the character of Mrs. Hall, and seeing that she was visited and caressed by certain people of *haut ton*, Miss B. considered that no reflection could be cast upon her character, by associating with her. Mrs. Hall was a woman whose intercourse with the world had enabled her to acquire that ease and freedom of manners which force their way so imperceptibly on the unsuspecting heart, and she soon acquired such an ascendancy over her young friend, as could not fail to be dangerous when exercised by an intriguing woman. The circumstance of Mrs. Hall being the intimate acquaintance of Miss Bolton was soon made public, and the panders of the Prince saw in that circumstance the consummation of all their designs. A private negotiation was entered into with Mrs. Hall, and everything presented an early prospect of success. In the mean time, this woman ingratiated herself deeper and deeper in the good opinion of Miss Bolton; and on the latter leaving Windsor to resume her professional duties in town, Mrs. Hall proposed to return with her, and it was finally agreed that she should take up her abode with the family, and on such terms as, at that time of day, would aid Miss Bolton's exemplary endeavours to maintain her family.

In order, however, to render this narrative perfectly intelligible, it will be necessary to remark that, in the acceptance of the world, Mrs. Hall was considered as Mrs. P——, the wife of Captain P——; but the name of Hall was that by which she was known as the *chère amie* of Mr. Sykes, and at a certain celebrated brothel which was then kept in Duke-street, St. James'. This expensive establishment was once maintained

by six ladies, all of a particular form and make, combining the *en bon point* with extreme elegance of carriage, and the most perfect symmetry of shape. Of this nucleus of feminine beauty Mrs. Hall was by no means the least conspicuous member; and amongst the few select individuals who were admitted into this voluptuous harem, was the gentleman to whom we are indebted for these interesting anecdotes, and who was fortunately the individual who first put Miss Bolton's family on their guard, in respect to the character of their new associate.

Being on intimate terms with the Bolton family, this gentleman, on the arrival of Miss Bolton in Long Acre, proceeded to pay his respects to her; and on entering the drawing-room, to his infinite astonishment, he was introduced to Mrs. P., in whom he immediately recognized the Mrs. Hall, of Duke-street, and consequently a most improper inmate for the house of Mr. Bolton. He hesitated not a moment to caution that gentleman against his new acquaintance, as a dangerous companion for his daughter, especially as Mrs. P. was soon visited by General F. Turner and Colonel M'Mahon, both persons intimately concerned in promoting the pleasures of Carlton House, and in procuring gratifications for their royal master. The intrigue consequently continued to progress agreeably to the wishes of Mrs. Hall, when a trifling incident, under the eye of Providence, disturbed and finally crushed the attempt meditated against the virtue of Miss Bolton.

Amongst those whom the good sense and virtue of this lady had attached to her, was the late Dr. Blackborough, and to whose protection she owed her introduction to many persons of worth and character in the fashionable world. It was fortunate that it was so, as Miss Bolton certainly owed her disentanglement to his advice and fortunate interposition on the following occasion. At this period, a noted milliner, of the name of Brace, resided in Pall Mall, whose house was the resort of the leading fashionables of the day, and many repaired to it for very different purposes than the adjustment of their dress. This house was so situated that it ran back into St. James' square, in which it formed at that time No. 10, but which, for very obvious reasons, has since been altered. At this house

in St. James'-square, a person of the name of Watson was supposed to keep a faro-table, and therefore the frequent egress and ingress of some of the highest noblemen of the country excited very little surprise; but the house was in reality a place of assignation—the lady entering by the house in Pall Mall, the gentleman by that in St. James'-square.

Perhaps no woman was better qualified for the task she had undertaken than Mrs. Hall. The blandishments of her manners—her thorough acquaintance with the forms of society—her fashionable exterior—flexibility of mind, and consummate tact in applying those accomplishments to fascinate and secure her victim,—who then can wonder at the infatuation which Miss Bolton manifested in her conduct with this woman? in fact, she appeared to be spell-bound by the magic power of the enchantress, and her influence began to awaken passions which the exemplary prudence of her mother had checked, or directed to invigorate the better principles of her nature. In the mean time the visits of M^r. Mahon become more frequent—presents succeeded presents—and she was now told of *the unalterable love* which the heir-apparent to the crown had imbibed for her. The Prince was, it is true, a married man, but his separation from his wife had taken place, and, therefore, no act of matrimonial infidelity could be pleaded against him.

Miss Bolton was now about to appear at the theatre in a new character—and this occasion was seized upon to consummate her ruin—a most splendid dress was to be provided for her by her secret lover, such as had never before been seen on a British stage. The first step to accomplish the ruin of a female is to excite her vanity—it is the most successful instrument that can be used, and, in the present instance, was very near producing the wished-for effect. The person employed to make this superb dress was Mrs. Brace, and an hour was appointed when she was to make her appearance to try it on. At this critical hour Dr. Blackborough was passing from St. James'-square into Pall-mall, when he observed the Prince of Wales entering the house No. 10; but the circumstance made no deep impression on his mind, until, turning the corner into Pall-mall, he observed Mrs. Hall and Miss Bolton (the latter ignorant that

she was about to meet the man who was bent on her ruin) on the point of entering the house of Mrs. Brace. The danger of Miss Bolton was at once apparent to the worthy doctor, who knew the character of Mrs. Hall, and who was now able to account for the visit of the Prince of Wales to the house in St. James'-square. He lost not a moment in accosting Miss Bolton—asked in a very unceremonious manner if she were acquainted with the character of her companion, and insisted upon conducting her back to her parents. In a moment Miss Bolton saw the gulf on the brink of which she was standing; with tears in her eyes she threw herself under the protection of Dr. Blackborough, who led her home, and she lived to be the virtuous spouse of Lord Thurlow.

High events like these
Strike those that make them.

SECTION IV.

[From 1800 to 1810.]

THE peace of Amiens, or rather the truce of Amiens (for a treaty concluded under circumstances of mutual jealousy and suspicion hardly deserves the name of peace), was destined to be of no long duration. The effervescence caused by the French revolution had by no means subsided when that peace was concluded. It was a matter, as the British ministers frankly confessed, purely of experiment, and its continuance was to depend upon a steady view of the conduct and principles of the government of France. After a war of so long duration as that to which the French revolution gave birth, and so many animosities as that great civil convulsion excited, it was not to be expected that the two nations should at once harmonize together. Peace was signed, and an intercourse renewed between them, but still it was an intercourse of restraint on the one part, and of suspicion on the other. There was no hostility, but there was no cordial union.

In a question where our own interests and feelings are so immediately concerned, it is not easy to say where the fault lay; but this may be affirmed, without much fear of contradiction, that no war was entered into on the part of Great Britain, in which she appeared as the aggressor, which had so decisively the sanction of a vast majority of the people as that which took place at this period.

The conduct of the government of France, from the peace of Amiens, had been, to say the best of it, equivocal; but a serious insult was offered to the high spirit and independence of the British nation, when it was proposed that the British government should take under its immediate cognizance the freedom of the British press, and prevent the appearance of publications offensive to the government of France. This was one of the points more particularly insisted upon in the discussions of this memorable period by the chief of the French

nation. Accustomed to have his will regarded as law at home, and having nearly the whole continental press either under his control, or at his devotion, the attacks of our news-writers and pamphleteers excited in him the highest degree of resentment. It was honourable to the English character thus to call forth the indignation of the head of the French government. No where, on the face of the globe, is there to be found, in the same space, an assemblage of men so competent to discuss questions of moral equity between individual and individual, or state and state, as in the British nation. The persons who compose the thinking part of the body politic of this great community are certainly more eminently qualified than any other great community at present in existence, to pass judgment either on the acts of their own government, or on those of any other nation. Foreigners judge very ill of us if they do not conceive that the opinion of this body has a most material weight in the administration of our public affairs. This seems to have been misunderstood in France, when requisition was made by its government to abridge the freedom of the British press.

As soon as this circumstance became known, it excited in the literary world a degree of indignation without example. The literati, whatever party they had before espoused, united to oppose this insolent and audacious attempt of the French government to fetter the freedom of the press. On this occasion they were a united body; and it deserves, for the honour of British literature, to be recorded, that (if we except one man's) there was not to be found in the whole nation a single press which French principles or French gold could corrupt.

In the two houses of parliament, the spirit of indignant patriotism glowed with equal ardour. Mr. Sheridan greatly distinguished himself upon this occasion. In one of the most brilliant speeches he ever delivered, he drew a striking picture of the relative situations of England and France. 'Look,' said he, 'at the map of Europe; there, where a great man (Mr. Burke) said he looked for France, and found nothing but a chasm. It was in our power to measure her territory, to reckon her population; but it was scarcely within the grasp

of any man's mind to measure the ambition of Buonaparte. If, then, it were true, as he had stated, that his ambition was of that immeasurable nature, there were abundant and obvious reasons why it should be progressive—reasons much stronger than any which could have existed under the power of the Bourbons. They were ambitious; but it was not necessary for them to feed their subjects with the spoil and plunder of war. They had the attachment of a long-established family applied to them; they had the effect and advantage of hereditary succession. But he saw, in the very situation and composition of the power of Buonaparte, a physical necessity for him to go on in this barter with his subjects; and to promise to make them the masters of the world, if they would consent to be his slaves. If that were the case, must not his most anxious looks be directed to Great Britain? Everything else was petty and contemptible, compared with it. Russia, if not in his power, was at least in his influence. Prussia was at his beck—Italy was his vassal—Holland was in his grasp—Spain at his nod—Turkey in his toils—Portugal at his feet. When he saw this, could he hesitate in stating his feelings? still less could he hesitate in giving a vote that should put us upon our guard against the machinations and workings of such an ambition.'

In another part of his speech, Mr. Sheridan drew a striking picture of the malignant character of Buonaparte's ambition, particularly as it related to this country. In the tablet and volume of his mind, he said, there might be some marginal note about cashiering the King of Etruria, but the whole text was occupied with the destruction of this country. This was the first vision that broke upon him through the gleam of the morning; this was his last prayer at night, to whatever deity he addressed it, whether to Jupiter, or to Mahomet; to the god of battles, or the goddess of reason. An important lesson was to be learnt from the arrogance of Buonaparte. He said he was an instrument in the hands of providence—an envoy of God; he said he was an instrument in the hands of providence, to restore Switzerland to happiness, and to elevate Italy to splendour and importance; and he (Mr. Sheridan) thought he was an instrument in the hands of providence to

make the English love their constitution the better ; to cling to it with more fondness, and to hang round it with truer tenderness. Every man felt when he returned from France, that he was coming from a dungeon, to enjoy the light and life of British independence. Whatever abuses exist, we should still look with pride and pleasure upon the substantial blessings we still enjoy. He believed too, that Buonaparte was an instrument in the hands of providence, to make us more liberal in our political differences, and to render us determined, with one heart and hand, to oppose any aggressions that might be made upon us. If that aggression were made, his honourable friend (Mr. Fox) would, he was sure, agree with him, that we ought to meet it with a spirit worthy of these islands ; and that we ought to meet it with a conviction of the truth of this assertion, that the country which had achieved such greatness had no retreat in littleness ; that if we could be content to abandon every thing, we shall find no safety in poverty, no security in abject submission. Finally, that we ought to meet it with a fixed determination to perish in the same grave with the honour and independence of the country.

In the Upper House, about the same time, Lord Moira, in a most animated address, called the attention of their lordships to the situation of the country. He was not for speaking of Buonaparte, he said, in such terms of gentleness and moderation as other noble lords had used. What was there in the procedure of the First Consul that could recommend such forbearance ? He saw no motive for further compliment to this new Hannibal, who had, on the altars of his inordinate ambition, sworn unextinguishable enmity to this country. Were he to speak of the First Consul in any other relation than that which he had assumed to the concerns of Britain, he would speak of him with the deference befitting his high station, and with the respect which his wonderful actions must demand. But when he wilfully opposed himself to the welfare of these realms, nay, openly struck at the root of their prosperity, the language of complacency on that head was ill-timed and mischievous. If, said his lordship, you would avert war, you must shew yourselves on a level with the exigency. You must, in the immortal language of Shakspeare,

Be stirring as the time ; be fire with fire ;
Threaten the threat'ner, and out face the brow
Of bragging honour——

not from any false ostentation of courage, but to insure this solid, this inappreciable advantage, which the bard truly indicated would be the result :

—————So shall inferior eyes,
That borrow their behaviour from the great,
Grow great by your example, and put on
The useful spirit of resolution !

It is impossible adequately to describe the effects produced out of doors on the minds of the people by these energetic harangues ; and their influence was the greater when it was considered that Lord Moira and Mr. Sheridan were the particular friends of the Prince of Wales, and consequently that their sentiments might be supposed not to be very dissimilar from those of his Royal Highness himself.

On the actual renewal of hostilities, never did the national spirit soar to a higher pitch of proud and dignified patriotism. Volunteer associations were formed with incredible industry in all parts of the country, and persons of the highest rank did not think it beneath them to serve as private men *. Immense contributions of money were, at the same time, raised, to reward the brave men who might distinguish themselves in the service of their country, or alleviate the sufferings of those who

* Some of his Majesty's ministers, at the period alluded to, were privates in the corps called the Royal Pimlico Volunteers. The Duke of Clarence commanded a corps raised in the neighbourhood of Bushy Park, called the Royal Spelthorn Legion. The speech which his Royal Highness made to them on their first assembling deserves to be preserved for its manly and patriotic simplicity.—' My friends and neighbours,' said his Royal Highness, ' wherever our duty calls us, I will go with you ; fight in your ranks, and never return home without you.'

On the 4th of December, 1803, the Prince of Wales presented a pair of colours to this corps, (on Ashford Common) and addressed them in the following words :—

' Volunteers !—It is with the highest satisfaction I have taken upon myself the honourable office of presenting the Royal Spelthorn Legion this day with their colours. When I view so respectable a corps, and consider the high character attached to it, it would be superfluous in me to point out those duties and obligations which have been so fully exemplified in its conduct. When you behold these colours (taking them in his hand) they will remind you of the common cause in which you are engaged, for your king, your country, your religion, your laws, your property, your children, and your wives, nay, in short, every thing dear to Englishmen. Accept then this pledge, this sacred pledge, which you will take care to defend with your last drop of blood, and only resign with your lives.'

might bleed in her defence. In a word, nothing could exceed the patriotic ardour displayed by all ranks upon the occasion.

But 'amidst the general note of preparation,' some surprise was excited in the public mind, that at a crisis of such a moment, involving the very fate of the country, no station, equal to his prominent rank in the state, was assigned to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. He was only a colonel of dragoons, while military commands of the highest importance were bestowed on the junior branches of the Royal Family. The public had not time sufficient to indulge in much speculation on this apparent backwardness of the Heir Apparent, when the following correspondence was published by permission of his Royal Highness, in order to do away with the ill impression which the seeming singularity of his conduct was likely to produce, as well as to vindicate his reputation in the eyes of his country and of Europe at large.

The first letter in this interesting correspondence was from the Prince of Wales to Mr. Addington.

'Carlton House, July 18, 1803.

'Sir,—The subject on which I address you presses so heavily on my mind, and daily acquires such additional importance, that, notwithstanding my wish to avoid any interference with the disposition made by his Majesty's ministers, I find it impossible to withhold or delay an explicit statement of my feelings, to which I would direct your most serious consideration.

'When it was officially communicated to parliament that the avowed object of the enemy was a descent on our kingdoms, the question became so obvious, that the circumstances of the times required the voluntary tender of personal services; when parliament, in consequence of this representation, agreed to extraordinary measures for the defence of these realms alone, it was evident the danger was not believed dubious nor remote. Animated by the same spirit which pervaded the nation at large, conscious of the duties which I owed to his Majesty and the country, I seized the earliest opportunity to express my desire of undertaking the responsibility of a military command: I neither did, nor do presume on supposed talents as entitling me to such an appointment. I am aware I do not possess the experience of actual warfare; at the

same time I cannot regard myself as totally unqualified, nor deficient in military science, since I have long made the service my particular study. My chief pretensions were founded on a sense of those advantages which my example might produce to the state, by exciting the loyal energies of the nation, and a knowledge of those expectations which the public had a right to form as to the personal exertion of their princes at a moment like the present. The more elevated my situation, in so much the efforts of zeal became necessarily greater; and I confess, that if duty has not been so paramount, a reflection on the splendid achievements of my predecessors would have excited in me the spirit of emulation: when, however, in addition to such recollections, the nature of the contest in which we are about to engage was impressed on my consideration, I should, indeed, have been devoid of every virtuous sentiment, if I felt no reluctance in remaining a passive spectator of armaments, which have for their object the very existence of the British empire.

‘Thus was I influenced to make my offer of service, and I did hope that his Majesty’s ministers would have attached to it more value. But when I find that, from some unknown cause, my appointment seems to remain so long undetermined; when I feel myself exposed to the obloquy of being regarded by the country of passing my time indifferent to the events which menace, and insensible to the call of patriotism, much more of glory, it then becomes me to examine my rights, and to remind his Majesty’s ministers that the claim which I have advanced is strictly constitutional, and justified by precedent; and that in the present situation of Europe, to deny my exercising it is fatal to my own immediate honour, and the future interests of the crown.

I can never forget that I have solemn obligations imposed on me by my birth, and that I should ever shew myself foremost in contributing to the preservation of the country. The time is arrived when I may prove myself sensible of the duties of my situation, and of evincing my devotion to that sovereign, who by nature as well as public worth commands my most affectionate attachment.

‘I repeat that I should be sorry to embarrass the government at any time, most particularly at such a crisis: but since no event in my future life can compensate me for the misfortune of not participating in the honours and dangers that await the brave men destined to oppose an invading enemy, I cannot forego the earnest renewal of my application.

‘All I solicit is a more ostensible situation than that in which I

am at present placed ; for situated as I am, a mere colonel of a regiment, the major-general commanding the brigade, of which such regiment must form a part, would justly expect and receive the full credit of pre-arrangement and successful enterprise.

‘ I am, Sir,

‘ Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *George IV.* G. P.

‘ *Right Hon. Henry Addington,*

&c. &c. &c.’

This letter producing no immediate reply, the Prince of Wales addressed the following note to Mr. Addington.

‘ *July 26, 1803.*

‘ A week has now elapsed since the Prince of Wales transmitted to Mr. Addington a letter on a subject of the highest importance. Though he cannot anticipate a refusal to so reasonable a demand, he must still express some surprise, that a communication of such a nature should have remained so long unanswered.

‘ When the Prince of Wales desired to be placed in a situation, which might enable him to shew to the people of England an example of zeal, fidelity, and devotion to his sovereign, he naturally thought, that he was only fulfilling his appropriate duty as the first subject of the realm, in which, as it has pleased Providence to cause him to be born, so he is determined to maintain himself, by all those honourable exertions which the exigencies of these critical times peculiarly demand. The motives of his conduct cannot be misconceived nor misrepresented ; he has, at a moment when everything is at stake that is dear and sacred to him, and to the nation, asked to be advanced in military rank, because he may have his birth-right to fight for, the throne of his father to defend, the glory of the people of England to uphold, which is dearer to him than life, which has yet remained unsullied under the princes of the house of Brunswick, and which, he trusts, will be transmitted pure and unsullied to the latest generations. Animated by such sentiments, he has naturally desired to be placed in a situation where he can act according to the feelings of his heart and the dictates of his conscience.

‘ In making the offer, in again repeating it, the Prince of Wales considers that he has only performed his duty to himself, to the state, to the King, and to Europe, whose fate may be involved in the issue of this contest ; if this tender of his services is rejected, he shall ever lament that all his efforts have been fruitless, and that

he has been deprived of making those exertions, which the circumstances of the empire, his own inclinations, and his early and long attention to military affairs, would have rendered so peculiarly grateful to himself, and, he trusts, not entirely useless to the public.

To this communication the Chancellor of the Exchequer returned the following answer.

Downing Street, July 27, 1803.

‘ Upon receiving the letter with which Mr. Addington was last week honoured by the Prince of Wales, he assured his Royal Highness, that it should be immediately laid before the King. A communication was afterwards made to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in a mode, and through a channel which Mr. Addington humbly hoped his Royal Highness would approve. Mr. Addington, however, now finds it to be incumbent upon him, in consequence of the expectation which has been expressed by his Royal Highness, to state, that his Majesty, on being informed of the sentiments and wishes of the Prince of Wales, applauded in the strongest manner the feelings by which his Royal Highness is actuated; but referred, nevertheless, to the answers which his Majesty had judged it necessary to return to similar representations, and which, in obedience to the commands of his Royal Highness, had been laid before his Majesty on a former occasion.’

The Prince of Wales then desired Mr. Addington to lay his note of the 26th of July before the King, which was accordingly done, and his Royal Highness received from the minister the following reply.

Downing Street, August 1, 1803.

‘ Sir,—In obedience to the commands of your Royal Highness, I laid before his Majesty the letter dated the 26th of July, with which your Royal Highness honoured me; and I have it in command from his Majesty to acquaint your Royal Highness, that the King had referred Mr. Addington to the orders he had before given him, with the addition, that the King’s opinion being fixed, he desired that no further mention should be made to him upon the subject.

‘ I have the honour to be,

‘ With every sentiment of respect and deference,

‘ Sir,

‘ Your Royal Highness’ most humble Servant,

(Signed)

‘ HENRY ADDINGTON.’

On receiving this communication, the following *admirable* letter was addressed by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to the King: we have already given an extract from it in a former part of this work, but we now give it entire. It has been stated that these letters were from the pen of Sheridan, but the first of the series was written by Sir Robert Wilson, and the remainder by Lord Hutchinson. We find it however stated in the *Morning Chronicle*, that these letters were actually written by Mr. Fonblanque, who then enjoyed more of the confidence of the Prince, than his professional advisers.

‘ Sir,—A correspondence has taken place between Mr. Addington and myself, on a subject which deeply involves my honour and character. The answers which I have received from that gentleman, the communication which he has made to the House of Commons, leave me no hope but an appeal to the justice of your Majesty. I make that appeal with confidence, because I feel that you are my natural advocate, and with the sanguine hope that the ears of an affectionate father may still be opened to the applications of a dutiful son.

‘ I ask to be allowed to display the best energies of my character; to shed the last drop of my blood in support of your Majesty’s person, crown, and dignity; for this is not a war for empire, glory, or dominion, but for existence. In this contest, the lowest and humblest of your Majesty’s subjects have been called on; it would therefore little become me, who am the *first*, and who stand at the very footstool of the throne, to remain a tame, an idle, and a lifeless spectator of the mischiefs which threaten us, unconscious of the dangers which surround us, and indifferent to the consequences which may follow. Hanover is lost—England is menaced with invasion—Ireland is in rebellion—Europe is at the foot of France. At such a moment the Prince of Wales, yielding to none of your servants in zeal and devotion—to none of your subjects in duty—to none of your children in tenderness and affection—presumes to approach you, and again to repeat those offers which he has already made through your Majesty’s minister. A feeling of honest ambition, a sense of what I owe to myself and to my family—and, above all, the fear of sinking in the estimation of that gallant army, which may be the support of your Majesty’s crown and my best hope hereafter, command me to persevere, and to assure your Majesty with all humility and respect, that, conscious of the justice of my claim, no human power can ever induce me to relinquish it.

‘ Allow me to say, Sir, that I am bound to adopt this line of conduct by every motive dear to me as a man, and sacred to me as a Prince. Ought I not to come forward in a moment of unexampled difficulty and danger? Ought I not to share in the glory of the victory, when I have everything to lose by defeat? The highest places in your Majesty’s service are filled by the younger branches of the Royal family: to me alone no place is assigned. I am not thought worthy to be the junior major-general of your army. If I could submit in silence to such indignities, I should indeed deserve such treatment, and prove to the satisfaction of your enemies, and my own, that I am entirely incapable of those exertions, which my birth and the circumstances of the times peculiarly call for. Standing so near the throne, when I am debased, the cause of royalty is wounded; I cannot sink in the public opinion, without the participation of your Majesty in my degradation. Therefore every motive of private feeling and of public duty induces me to implore your Majesty to review your decision, and to place me in that situation, which my birth, the duties of my station, the example of my predecessors, and the expectations of the people of England entitle me to claim.

‘ Should I be disappointed in the hope which I have formed, should this last appeal to the justice of my sovereign, and to the affection of my father, fail of success, I shall lament in silent submission his determination; but Europe, the world, and posterity, must judge between us.

‘ I have done my duty; my conscience acquits me; my reason tells me that I was perfectly justified in the request which I have made, because no reasonable arguments have ever been adduced in answer to my pretensions. The precedents in our history are in my favour; but if they were not, the times in which we live, and especially the exigencies of the present moment, require us to become an example to our posterity.

‘ No other cause of refusal has or can be assigned, except that it is the will of your Majesty. To that will and pleasure I bow with every degree of humility and resignation; but I can never cease to complain of the severity which has been exercised against me, and the injustice I have suffered, till I cease to exist.

‘ I have the honour to subscribe myself,

‘ With all possible devotion,

‘ Your Majesty’s

‘ Most dutiful and affectionate son and subject,

(Signed)

‘ G. P.

‘ *Brighthelmstone, Aug. 6, 1803.*

LETTER FROM THE KING.

‘ My dear Son,—Though I applaud your zeal and spirit, of which, I trust, no one can suppose any of my family wanting, yet, considering the repeated declarations I have made of my determination on your former applications to the same purpose, I had flattered myself to have heard no further on the subject.

‘ Should the implacable enemy so far succeed as to land, you will have an opportunity of shewing your zeal at the head of your regiment; it will be the duty of every man to stand forward on such an occasion, and I shall certainly think it mine to set an example, in defence of every thing that is dear to me, and to my people.

‘ I ever remain,

‘ My dear Son,

‘ Your most affectionate father,

(Signed) GEORGE R.’

‘ Windsor, August 7, 1803.

The Prince of Wales replied to this communication in the following words:—

‘ Brighthelmstone, August 23, 1803.

‘ Sir,—I have delayed thus long an answer to the letter which your Majesty did me the honour to write, from the wish to refer to a former correspondence which took place between us in the year 1798. Those letters were mislaid, and some days elapsed before I could discover them. They have since been found. Allow me then, Sir, to recal to your recollection the expressions you were then graciously pleased to use, and which I once before took the liberty of reminding you of, when I solicited foreign service, upon my first entering into the army. They were, Sir, that your Majesty did not then see the opportunity for it, but if any thing was to arise at home, “I ought to be first and foremost.” There cannot be a stronger expression in the English language, or one more consonant to the feelings which animate my heart. In this I agree most perfectly with your Majesty—“I ought to be first and foremost.” It is the place which my birth assigns me—which Europe—which the English nation—expect me to fill—and which the former assurances of your Majesty might naturally have led me to hope I should occupy. After such a declaration, I could hardly expect to be told that my place was at the head of a regiment of dragoons.

‘ I understand from your Majesty, that it is your intention, Sir,

in pursuance of that noble example which you have shewn during the course of your reign, to place yourself at the head of the people of England. My next brother, the Duke of York, commands the army; the younger branches of my family are either generals, or lieutenant-generals; and I, who am Prince of Wales, am to remain colonel of dragoons. There is something so humiliating in the contrast, that those who are at a distance, would either doubt the reality, or suppose that to be my fault which is only my misfortune.

‘Who could imagine, that I, who am the oldest colonel in the service, had asked for the rank of a general officer in the army of the king, my father, and that it had been refused me?’

‘I am sorry, much more than sorry, to be obliged to break in upon your leisure, and to trespass thus, a second time, on the attention of your Majesty; but I have, Sir, an interest in my character more valuable to me than the throne, and dearer, far dearer to me than life. I am called upon by that interest to persevere, and pledge myself never to desist, till I receive that satisfaction, which the justice of my claim leads me to expect.

‘In these unhappy times, the world, Sir, examines the conduct of princes with a jealous, a scrutinizing, a malignant eye. No man is more aware than I am of the existence of such a disposition, and no man is therefore more determined to place himself above all suspicion.

‘In desiring to be placed in a forward situation, I have performed one duty to the people of England; I must now perform another, and humbly supplicate your Majesty to assign those reasons which have induced you to refuse a request which appears to me and to the world so reasonable and so rational.

‘I must again repeat my concern, that I am obliged to continue a correspondence which, I fear, is not so grateful to your Majesty as I could wish. I have examined my own heart—I am convinced of the justice of my cause—of the purity of my motives. Reason and honour forbid me to yield: where no reason is alleged, I am justified in the conclusion that none can be given.

‘In this candid exposition of the feelings which have agitated and depressed my wounded mind, I hope no expressions have escaped me which can be construed to mean the slightest disrespect to your Majesty. I most solemnly disavow any such intention; but the circumstances of the times—the danger of invasion, the appeal which has been made to all your subjects, oblige me to recollect what I owe to my own honour and to my own character,

to state to your Majesty with plainness, truth, and candour, but with all the submission of a subject and the duty of an affectionate son, the injuries under which I labour, and which it is in the power of your Majesty alone at one moment to redress.

‘ It is with sentiments of the profoundest veneration and respect that I have the honour to subscribe myself,

‘ Your Majesty’s most dutiful,

‘ And most affectionate,

‘ Son and subject,

(Signed) *George IV.* G. P.

A correspondence was subsequently entered into between the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, on the same subject, and the following letters passed between their Royal Highnesses on the occasion :—

‘ *Brighton, October 2, 1803.*

‘ My dear Brother,—By last night’s Gazette, which I have this moment received, I perceive that an extensive promotion has taken place in the army, wherein my pretensions are not noticed ; a circumstance which, whatever may have happened on other occasions, it is impossible for me to pass by, at this momentous crisis, without observation.

‘ My standing in the army, according to the most ordinary routine of promotion, had it been followed up, would have placed me either at the bottom of the list of generals, or at the head of the list of lieutenant-generals. When the junior branches of my family are promoted to the highest military situations, my birth, according to the distinctions usually conferred on it, should have placed me first on that list.

‘ I hope you know me too well to imagine, that idle, inactive rank is in my view ; much less is the direction and patronage of the military departments an object which suits my place in the state, or my inclinations : but, in a moment when the danger of the country is thought by government so urgent as to call forth the energy of every arm in its defence, I cannot but feel myself degraded, both as a prince and a soldier, if I am not allowed to take a forward and distinguished part in the defence of that empire and crown, of the glory, prosperity, and even existence of that people, in all which mine is the greatest stake.

‘ To be told I may display this zeal solely and simply at the head of my regiment is a *degrading mockery*.

‘If that be the only situation allotted me, I shall certainly do my duty, as others will; but the considerations to which I have already alluded entitle me to expect, and bind me every way to require, a situation more correspondent to the dignity of my own character, and to the public expectation. It is for the sake of tendering my services in a way more formal and official than I have before pursued, that I address this to you, my dear brother, as the Commander-in-chief, by whose counsels the constitution presumes that the military department is administered.

‘If those who have the honour to advise his Majesty on this occasion shall deem my pretensions, among those of all the royal family, to be the only one fit to be rejected and disdained, I may at least hope, as a debt of justice and honour, to have it explained, that I am laid by in virtue of that judgment, and not in consequence of any omission or want of energy on my part.

&c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

‘*His Royal Highness the Duke of York, &c.*’



REPLY OF THE DUKE OF YORK.

‘*Horse Guards, Oct. 6, 1803.*

‘Dearest Brother,—Nothing but an extraordinary press of business would have prevented me from acknowledging sooner your letter of the 2d instant, which I received while at Oatlands on Monday evening.

‘I trust that you are too well acquainted with my affection for you, which has existed since our most tender years, not to be assured of the satisfaction I have felt; and ever must feel, in forwarding, when in my power, every desire or object of yours; and therefore will believe how much I must regret the impossibility there is, upon the present occasion, of my executing your wishes of laying the representation contained in your letter before his Majesty.

‘Suffer me, my dearest brother, as the only answer that I can properly give you, to recall to your memory what passed upon the same subject soon after his Majesty was graciously pleased to place me at the head of the army; and I have no doubt that, with your usual candour, you will yourself see the absolute necessity of my declining it.

‘In the year 1795, upon a general promotion taking place, at your instance I delivered a letter from you to his Majesty, urging your pretensions to promotion in the army; to which his Majesty

was pleased to answer, that, before ever he had appointed you to the command of the 10th light dragoons, he had caused it to be fully explained to you what his sentiments were with respect to a Prince of Wales entering into the army, and the public grounds upon which he could never admit of your considering it as a profession, or of your being promoted in the service. And his Majesty, at the same time, added *his positive commands and injunctions* to me, never to mention this subject again to him, and to decline being the bearer of any application of the same nature, should it be proposed to me; which message I was, of course, under the necessity of delivering to you, and have constantly made it the rule of my conduct ever since; and, indeed, I have ever considered it as one of the greatest proofs of affection and consideration towards me, on the part of his Majesty, that he never allowed me to become a party in this business. Having thus stated to you, fairly and candidly, what has passed, I must trust you will see that there can be no ground for the apprehension expressed in the latter part of your letter, that any slur can attach to your character as an officer; particularly as I recollect your mentioning to me yourself, on the day on which you received the notification of your appointment to the 10th light dragoons, the explanation and condition attached to it by his Majesty; and, therefore, surely you must be satisfied that your not being advanced in military rank proceeds entirely from his Majesty's sentiments respecting the high rank you hold in the state, and not from any impression unfavourable to you. Believe me ever, with the greatest truth,

‘Dearest Brother,

‘Your most affectionate Brother,

(Signed)

‘FREDERICK.’

‘*To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*’

‘*Brighton, Oct. 9, 1803.*

‘My dear Brother,—I have taken two days to consider the contents of your letter of the 6th instant, in order to be as accurate as possible in my answer, which must account to you for its being longer, perhaps, than I intended, or I could have wished.

‘I confide entirely in the personal kindness and affection expressed in your letter; and am, for that reason, the more unwilling to trouble you again on a painful subject, in which you are not free to act as your inclination, I am sure, would lead you. But as it is not at all improbable that every part of this transaction may be publicly canvassed hereafter, it is of the utmost importance to my

honour, without which I can have no happiness, that my conduct in it shall be fairly represented, and correctly understood. When I made a tender of my services to his Majesty's ministers, it was with a just and natural expectation that my offer would have been accepted in the way in which alone it could have been most beneficial to my country, or creditable to myself; or, if that failed, that at least (in justice to me) the reasons for a refusal would have been distinctly stated; so that the nation might be satisfied that nothing had been omitted on my part, and enabled to judge of the validity of the reasons assigned for such a refusal. In the first instance, I was referred to his Majesty's will and pleasure, and now I am informed by your letter that, before "he had appointed me to the command of the 10th light dragoons, he had caused it to be fully explained to me what his sentiments were with respect to a Prince of Wales entering into the army."

'It is impossible, my dear brother, that I should know all that passed between the King and you; but I perfectly recollect the statement you made of the conversation you had with his Majesty, and which strictly corresponds with that in your letter now before me. But I must, at the same time, recall to your memory my positive denial, at that time, of any condition or stipulation having been made upon my first coming into the army; and I am in possession of full and complete documents, which prove that no terms whatever were then proposed, at least to me, whatever might have been the intention: and the communications which I have found it necessary subsequently to make have ever disclaimed the existence of such a compromise at any period, as nothing could be more averse to my nature, or more remote from my mind.

'As to the conversation you quote in 1796 (when the King was pleased to appoint me to succeed Sir William Pitt), I have not the most slight recollection of its having taken place between us. My dear brother, if your date is right, you must be mistaken in your exact terms, or at least in the conclusion you draw from it; for, in the intimacy and familiarity of private conversation, it is not at all unlikely that I should have remembered the communication you made me the year before; but that I should have acquiesced in, or referred to, a compromise which I never made, is utterly impossible.

'Neither in his Majesty's letter to me, nor in the correspondence with Mr. Addington (of which you may not be fully informed), is there one word, or the most distant allusion to the condition stated in your letter; and even if I had accepted the command of a regi-

ment on such terms, my acquiescence could only have relation to the ordinary situation of the country, and not to a case so completely out of all contemplation at that time, as the probable or projected invasion of this kingdom by a foreign force sufficient to bring its safety into question. When the King is pleased to tell me, "that, should the enemy land, he shall think it his duty to set an example in defence of the country,"—that is, to expose the only life which, for the public welfare ought not to be hazarded,—I respect and admire the principles which dictate that resolution; and as my heart glows with the same sentiments, I wish to partake in the same danger—that is, with dignity and effect. Whenever his Majesty appears as King, he acts and commands; you are Commander-in-chief; others of my family are high in military stations; and even by the last brevet, a considerable number of junior officers are put over me. In all these arrangements, the Prince of Wales alone, whose interest in the event yields to none but that of the King, is disregarded, omitted—his services rejected: so that, in fact, he has no post or station whatsoever in a contest on which the fate of the crown and the kingdom may depend.

'I do not, my dear brother, wonder that, in the hurry of your present occupation, these considerations should have been overlooked. They are now in your view, and, I think, cannot fail to make a due impression.

'As to the rest, with every degree of esteem possible for your judgment of what is due to a soldier's honour, I must be the guardian of mine to the utmost of my power.

&c. &c.

(Signed)

'G. P.'

'*His Royal Highness the Duke of York.*'

'*Horse Guards, Oct. 11, 1803.*

'My dear Brother,—I have this moment, upon my arrival in town, found your letter, and lose no time in answering that part of it which appears to me highly necessary should be clearly understood. Indeed, my dear brother, you must give me leave to repeat to you, that, upon the fullest consideration, I perfectly recollect your having yourself told me at Carlton House, in the year 1793, on the day on which you were informed of his Majesty's having acquiesced in your request of being appointed to the command of the 10th regiment of light dragoons, of which Sir William Pitt was then colonel, the message and condition which was delivered to you from his Majesty; and which his Majesty repeated to me in the

year 1795, as mentioned in my letter of Thursday last. And I have the fullest reason to know that there are others to whom, at that time, you mentioned the same circumstance; nor have I the least recollection of your having denied it to me, when I delivered to you the King's answer; as I should certainly have felt it incumbent upon me to recall to your memory what you had told me yourself in the year 1793.

'No conversation whatever passed between us, as you justly remark, in the year 1796, when Sir William Pitt was promoted to the King's dragoon guards, which was done in consequence of what was arranged in 1795, upon your first appointment to the 10th light dragoons; and I conceive that your mentioning in your letter my having stated a conversation to have passed between us in 1798 must have arisen from some misapprehension, as I do not find *that* year ever adverted to in my letter.

'I have thought it due to us both, my dear brother, thus fully to reply to those parts of your letter in which you appear to have mistaken mine; but as I am totally unacquainted with the correspondence which has taken place upon this subject, I must decline entering any further into it.

'I remain ever, my dear Brother,

'With the greatest truth,

'Your most affectionate Brother,

(Signed)

'FREDERICK.'

'*His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*'

'*Brighton, Oct. 22, 1803.*

'My dear Brother,—By my replying to your letter of the 6th instant, which contained no sort of answer to mine of the 2d, we have fallen into a very frivolous altercation upon a topic which is quite foreign to the present purpose. Indeed, the whole importance of it lies in a seeming contradiction in the statement of a fact, which is unpleasant even upon the idlest occasion.

'I meant to assert, that no previous condition to forego all pretensions to ulterior rank, under any circumstances, had been imposed upon me, or even submitted to me, in any shape whatsoever, on my first coming into the service; and with as much confidence as can be used in maintaining a negative, I repeat that assertion.

'When I first became acquainted with his Majesty's purpose to withhold from me further advancement it is impossible to recollect; but that it was so early as the year 1793 I do not remember; and, if your expressions were less positive, I should add, nor believe:

but I certainly knew it, as you well knew, in 1795, and possibly before.—We were then engaged in war, therefore I could not think of resigning my regiment, if under other circumstances I had been disposed to do so ; but, in truth, my rank in the nation made military rank, in ordinary times, a matter of little consequence, except to my own private feelings. This sentiment I conveyed to you in my letter of the 2d, saying expressly that *mere idle, inactive* rank was in no sort my object ; but upon the prospect of an emergency when the King was to take the field, and the spirit of every Briton was roused to exertion, the place which I occupy in the nation made it indispensable to demand a post correspondent to that place, and to the public expectation. This sentiment I have the happiness to be assured, in a letter on this occasion, made a strong impression upon the mind, and commanded the respect and admiration of one very high in government.

‘ The only purpose of this letter, my dear brother, is to explain, since that is necessary, that my former ones meant not to give you the trouble of interceding as my advocate for mere rank in the army. Urging further my other more important claims upon government, would be vainly addressed to any person, who can really think that a former refusal of mere rank, under circumstances so widely different, or the most express waiving of such pretensions, if that had been the case, furnishes the slightest colour for the answer I have received to the tenders I have now made of my services.

‘ Your department, my dear brother, was meant, if I must repeat it, simply as a channel to convey that tender to government, and to obtain either their attention to it, or their avowed refusal, &c.

(Signed) ‘ G. P.’

‘ *His Royal Highness the Duke of York, &c.*’

‘ *Horse Guards, October 13, 1803.*

‘ Dear Brother,—I have received your letter this morning, and am sorry to find that you think that I have misconceived the meaning of your first letter, the whole tenor of which, and the military promotion which gave rise to it, led me naturally to suppose your desire was, that I should apply to his Majesty, in my official capacity, to give you military rank, to which might be attached the idea of subsequent command.

‘ That I found myself under the necessity of declining, in obedience to his Majesty’s pointed orders, as I explained to you in my letter of the 16th instant. But from your letter of to-day, I am to understand that your object is *not* military rank, but that a post

should be allotted to you, upon the present emergency, suitable to your situation in the state.

‘ This I conceive to be purely a political consideration, and as such totally out of my department; and as I have most carefully avoided, at all times, and under all circumstances, ever interfering in any political points, I must hope that you will not call upon me to deviate from the principles by which I have been invariably governed.

‘ Believe me, my dear Brother,

‘ Your most affectionate Brother,

(Signed) ‘ FREDERICK.’

‘ *His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*’

‘ *Carlton House, October 14, 1803.*

‘ My dear Brother,—It cannot but be painful to me to be reduced to the necessity of further explanation on the subject which it was my earnest wish to have closed, and which was of so clear and distinct a nature, as, in my humble judgment, to have precluded the possibility of either doubt or misunderstanding.

‘ Surely there must some strange fatality obscure my language in statement, or leave me somewhat deficient in the powers of explanation, when it can lead your mind, my dear brother, to such a palpable misconstruction (for far be it from me to fancy it wilful) of my meaning, as to suppose, for a moment, I had unconnected my object with *efficient military rank*, and transferred it entirely to the view of a *political station*, when you venture to tell me “ my object is not military rank, but that a post should be allotted to me, upon the present emergency, suitable to my situation in the state.”—Upon what ground you can hazard such an assertion, or upon what principles you can draw such an inference, I am utterly at a loss to determine; for I defy the skilful logician, in torturing the English language, to apply with *fairness* such a construction of any word or phrase of mine, contained in any one of the letters I have ever written on this, to me, most interesting subject. I call upon you to reperuse the correspondence. In my letter of the 2d instant, I told you *unequivocally* that I hoped you knew me too well to imagine that *idle, inactive* rank was in my view; and that sentiment, I beg you carefully to observe, I have in no instance whatever, for one single moment, relinquished or departed from.

‘ Giving, as I did, all the considerations of my heart to the delicacy and difficulties of your situation, nothing could have been more repugnant to my thoughts, or to my disposition, than to have imposed upon you, my dear brother, either in your capacity as com-

mander-in-chief, or in the near relationship which subsists between us, the task, much less the expectation, of causing you to risk any displeasure from his Majesty, by disobeying in *any* degree *his* commands, although they were even to militate against myself. But, with the impulse of my feelings towards you, and quickly conceiving what friendship and affection may be capable of, I did not, I own, think it entirely impossible, that you might, considering the magnitude and importance which the object carries with it, have officially advanced my wishes, as a matter of propriety, to *military rank and subsequent command*, through his Majesty's ministers, for that direct purpose; especially when the honour of my character and my future fame in life were so deeply involved in the consideration: for I must here again *emphatically repeat*, that *idle, inactive* rank was never in my view; and that military rank, with its consequent command, was NEVER out of it.

‘Feeling how useless, as well as ungracious, controversy is, upon every occasion, and feeling how fatally it operates upon human friendship, I must trust that our correspondence on this subject shall cease here; for nothing could be more distressing to me, than to prolong a topic, on which it is now clear to me, my dear brother, that you and I can never agree, &c. &c.

(Signed)

‘G. P.’

‘*His Royal Highness the
Duke of York.*’

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY
ADDINGTON.

Dated Richmond Park, Oct. 23, 1803.

‘Sir—In consequence of some intelligence which has reached me, I am impelled by a sense of duty to your Royal Highness, and to the public, to express an earnest and anxious hope, that you may be induced to postpone your return to Brighton until I shall have had an opportunity of making further inquiries, and of stating the results of them to your Royal Highness.

‘I have the honour to be,

‘With the utmost deference and respect,

‘Sir,

‘Your Royal Highness’s most faithful,

‘And most humble servant,

(Signed) ‘HENRY ADDINGTON.’

‘*The Prince of Wales.*’

ANSWER.

‘ *Carlton House, Oct. 24, 1803.*

‘ Sir,—By your grounding your letter to me upon intelligence which has just reached you, I apprehend that you allude to information which leads you to expect some immediate attempt from the enemy. My wish to accommodate myself to any thing which you represent as material to the public service, would of course make me desirous to comply with your request; but if there be any reason to imagine that invasion will take place directly, I am bound by the King’s precise order, and by that honest zeal, which if not allowed any fitter sphere for its action, to hasten instantly to my regiment. If I learn that my construction of the word intelligence be right, I must deem it necessary to repair to Brighton immediately, &c. &c.

(Signed)

‘ G. P.’ *

‘ *Right Honourable Henry Addington.*’

* An eminent political writer, William Cobbett, speaking of the refusal to grant the Prince of Wales a military command equivalent to his rank, says, ‘ To refuse the Prince a command, while the rest of his royal brothers are employed, is to make a distinction so invidious, is to cast such a slur on the character and rank of his Royal Highness, is, in effect, to give such a stab to the monarchy, that no person, who does not wish to see the destruction of that monarchy, or, at least, who is not perfectly indifferent as to its existence, can possibly hear of this refusal without feeling the utmost indignation at the conduct of the Ministers, to whom, and to whom *alone*, it can, or ought to be ascribed. That it is expedient that the heir-apparent to the throne should stand high in the opinions of the people, is, we imagine, the position, which even the Ministers themselves will hardly attempt to deny; and, disguise the fact how we may, it is absolutely impossible that, while the transaction of which we are now speaking remains enveloped in darkness, the people of this country, whose habit it is to think for themselves, should not entertain doubts respecting the character and views of their future sovereign, doubts not less dangerous to the present safety of the realm, than injurious to his Royal Highness. By publishing the correspondence, therefore, the danger would be removed, and the injury palliated, though by no means redressed. It has been officially declared, that his Royal Highness has offered his services as a general in the army, employed for the defence of the country, for the defence of the people over whom he is to reign, and whose peace and happiness and safety must, in a great degree, depend upon his wisdom and courage. All that the people know of, as the consequence of this offer, is, that it has been *rejected*. They are well aware that his Royal Highness has been a military man from his youth, they perceive his royal brothers and cousin invested with high military commands; and they, moreover, see the latter sent to infuse, by *his* presence, a military spirit into the people of that principality from which his Royal Highness takes his title! And can it be supposed that the people do not wish to know the cause of this distinction? Had the slanders of the king-killing saints reduced the nation to that state of indifference, gloomy indeed would be the prospect before us! As to the objection founded on the field-marshalship of his Royal Highness the Duke of York, that might have been obviated by placing the Prince at the head of the irregular army, a measure which would, in every point of view, have been attended with immense advantage to the service. Besides, if there had still been an objection to assigning the Prince a command in this island, what objection could there be, or can there now be, to giving him the military or civil command in Ireland,

Such was the correspondence that took place between his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Mr. Addington, the minister of the day, his Majesty, and his Royal Highness the

where there is every reason to hope and believe, that his presence alone would give greater security to the country, than an army of a hundred thousand men, and where, without some such step, it is greatly to be feared that tranquillity will never be restored?—No satisfactory reason can, therefore, be conceived, why, at this time of universal zeal and exertion, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales should be condemned to an irksome, not to say disgraceful inactivity; and the nation demands from the Ministers, and beseeches from his Royal Highness, that explanation which can be afforded only by the correspondence which has, on this subject, taken place between them. For want of an explanation of the truth, falsehoods are circulating in every direction; falsehoods the most atrocious in themselves, and of a tendency the most dangerous. We shall not dwell upon the insinuations which have been made as to the '*manner*' in which the Prince tendered his services, the '*exorbitant demands*' with which his offer was clogged, the '*interested*' and '*aspiring*' views apparent in his conduct. These wicked and base insinuations will produce little effect upon well-informed persons; but, then, how few are there that answer that description! The Minister did, indeed, condescend to acknowledge, that the Prince's offer was made in a 'most handsome and gallant manner;' but it is understood in the world that these are words of course; and, besides, their effect was instantly destroyed by the mysterious close of the Minister's declaration, from which the natural inference was, that something was suppressed in *tenderness* to the Prince. Thus it was that the affair went forth to the world; and under the improving influence of those wretches, who are never wanted to anticipate, and, we hope, in the present instance they have surpassed, the wishes of their superiors, the Prince's injuries have been increased a thousand fold. The truth is, that, unless the Ministers publish the correspondence, we for our parts cannot see how the Prince can avoid doing it; for, to suppose him *willing* to bear the conclusions which the partizans of Ministers draw from his silence, would be to join in the slander which we have so decidedly condemned. The publication of the correspondence will also destroy the effect of the insinuations, by the means of which it is attempted to *fix on another great personage* the blame of refusing the offers of the Prince. The nation will then see, that the refusal came from the *Ministers*, and from the nature of their excuses will be able to discover the real motives by which they have been actuated in injuring and insulting a personage, whom, next to their Royal Master, it was their bounden duty to cherish and to honour, but whom, for reasons too obvious to mention, they wish to keep in a state of helplessness and obscurity.'—*Political Register*, August 27, 1803.

Now mark the political consistency of Mr. Cobbett, who in this 'Essay' so loudly, and, in our opinion, so justly, calls for the publication of the Prince's correspondence. In his 'Register' of December 10, the same year, he has the following observations on that very correspondence which, no doubt, his own spirited and manly remarks were a great cause of being made public. 'The correspondence,' says he, 'between his Majesty, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, his Royal Highness the Duke of York, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having appeared in the other public prints, some surprise may, perhaps, be excited at its not appearing in the *Political Register*; but, when reflection shall have taken place of curiosity, I trust that there will be found but very few of my readers who will disapprove of the omission. A correspondence between *the Prince* and *the Minister* I should have thought myself at full liberty to publish, and also to comment on; but, from publishing the letters, which are here alluded to, I am withheld by all the notions which I entertain of the royal character, and by all the principles which have hitherto been the guide of my public conduct. There may, however, be some persons who will be disappointed at not seeing the correspondence in the *Political Register*, and who will, perhaps, deny that, after its appearance in every

Duke of York, commander-in-chief. Before we proceed to make any observations upon it, which we shall feel it our duty afterwards to do, but with the utmost delicacy and reserve, it may not be improper to mention that this correspondence would probably have remained a secret from the public, but for a conversation in the House of Commons, on the motion of Colonel (since) General Craufurd, for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the mode of fortifying the country. This brought on a debate of considerable length, in which Mr. Fox moved an amendment, recommending the appointment of a military council. After a long debate, Colonel Craufurd withdrew his motion; and the house continued debating on Mr. Fox's amendment until three o'clock in the morning, when a division took place, and the amendment was lost by a considerable majority.

In the course of the above debate, a motion was made that strangers should be excluded from the gallery. This being one of the standing orders of the House of Commons, a single member has the power of enforcing it, and though, in the present instance, the public good perhaps, according to the feelings of the member who wished the gallery to be cleared, was his predominant object, still instances have been known when the gallery has been cleared to gratify the purposes of private pique. We have no reason for thinking that this was the case at this time, and more particularly so, as the following particulars of what passed, while the house sat with closed doors, was published on the following morning, bearing with it every mark of authority.

‘ While strangers were excluded, it is understood that some

other periodical work, it ought to be excluded from mine. If this opinion should operate to the prejudice of my labours in general, I shall be sorry; if it should injure the cause that I have espoused, I shall still more sorely lament; but, neither this consideration nor any other shall induce me, either now or at any future period, to be instrumental in communicating to the world, or in putting upon record, the documents in question; or to admit into my work any comments on them, or allusion to them; a resolution which has been dictated by that profound respect and veneration which I entertain towards all the royal personages concerned, and particularly towards my Sovereign, to whom I am bound by the ties of affection, gratitude, and allegiance, and whose sacred office and person God has commanded me to honour.’—*Political Register*, December 10, 1803. It would be no difficult matter in this place to expose Mr. Cobbett's tergiversation and versatility; but, having placed his two separate opinions before the public, we leave them to form their judgment upon them.

very remarkable conversation took place with respect to an offer made by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales of his services at the present crisis; which, it was understood, had not been accepted. After several gentlemen had delivered their sentiments on this subject, Mr. Tyrwhitt, one of his Royal Highness' household, is stated to have spoken as follows:—

‘ Mr. Speaker, an illustrious personage, in whose family I have the honour to be placed, having been so directly alluded to by the honourable gentlemen who preceded me, I can no longer be silent. The Prince, from the very commencement of the war, has manifested an anxious wish to be placed in *any* military situation to which his Majesty might be pleased to call him, which wish has been made known to his Majesty's Ministers.

‘ I esteem it my duty, also, Sir, here to declare (deprecating any imputation that might be thrown upon a character of such value to us all to preserve unshaded), that if the services of the illustrious personage alluded to have been rejected, I have proof that the fault does not lie at his door.’

‘ Several members, and in particular Mr. Fox, having, upon this, pressed ministers to give an explanation of their reasons for refusing the services of the Heir Apparent, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, and it is said, spoke nearly as follows:—

‘ No man is more ready to bear attestation to feelings so worthy of the rank and character of the illustrious personage alluded to than I am. Having made this declaration, I must here pause, and declare that nothing short of the commands of the King, and the united authority of this house, shall in future ever compel me to say one word more upon the subject.’

Mr. Windham (than whom no man's opinion in the House of Commons was more highly entitled to consideration) most strongly enforced the necessity of a council of war, and thought, at all events, that the Prince of Wales ought to have a command.

Several other members spoke for and against the question; but the speech which most strongly arrested the attention of the House was that of Mr. Calcraft, who strenuously urged the

necessity of a council, and pointedly condemned its rejection for want of precedent, when the crisis, he said, was unprecedented. Mr. Calcraft spiritedly observed, that 'the Prince of Wales had been a colonel in the army from the year 1782. His brother was a field-marshal and commander-in-chief. Three younger brothers were lieutenant-generals. And you leave the heir-apparent to the monarchy to fight for that crown which he is one day to wear, as a colonel of a regiment, under the command of a major-general, his own equerry.'

This conversation, which took place on the 2d of August, 1803, was not followed by any subsequent proceedings in the House of Commons. Indeed, the delicacy of the subject, and the very proper reserve which the Minister preserved on the occasion, precluded almost all further discussion. But this did not prevent the question from being agitated out of doors. At a moment when invasion was almost daily expected, and when men of all ranks were called upon to afford their personal services at so exigent a crisis, it could not be thought wonderful that those who deserted their peaceful pursuits at such a moment, to follow the occupation of arms, should anxiously inquire, and perhaps with some degree of querulousness, what part was the Prince of Wales to act in such an unexampled moment of national alarm? Was he, at such a period, when commissions of the same rank as that which his Royal Highness bore were showered down with unheard-of profusion upon men certainly not of military habits, and, from their pursuits in life, not likely to be much acquainted with military affairs, to be content to remain in the station of a colonel, a station in which he could have no remarkable opportunity of distinguishing himself, and in which, it was well observed, he was liable to be commanded by one of his own servants?

His Majesty, as possessing, by the constitution, the power of disposing of all military preferments according to his own discretion, a discretion to which it is at all times equally our duty and our inclination to pay every respect and deference, certainly had a right to refuse to gratify the wishes of the Prince of Wales, in regard to military preferment, if he thought proper; and perhaps it was right, in a theoretical

point of view, that his Royal Highness should not be allowed to pursue the military line as a profession. In ordinary times, we should be inclined to hold the opinion that it was improper for a Prince of Wales to be invested with any high military command; and in a like manner, except in case of actual invasion, or of very imminent danger, we should be sorry to see the post of commander-in-chief filled by the sovereign himself. But taking into consideration the alarming state of the nation—the extraordinary danger that menaced it,—the character of the enemy,—his military genius,—his immense resources,—and above all, the implacable hatred with which he seemed actuated against this country, it could not but excite some surprise to see the Prince of Wales, at a moment of such unparalleled difficulty, continue in the station comparatively of a *privaté* nature, and an inquiry was naturally made into the cause which produced a conduct in the heir of the monarchy apparently so unworthy of his birth, and of his stake in the glory and independence of his country. The feelings of the people of England demanded an explanation, and the mode which his Royal Highness adopted for giving that explanation was the best which could have been devised on the occasion. The publication of the correspondence of the Prince of Wales, his Majesty, the Duke of York, and the Minister, completely exonerated the Prince from every charge of remissness or inattention to the dangers that menaced his country, and procured him the applause of every patriotic and spirited individual in the nation.

Ecce iterum Crispinus. The imbecility of the Addington administration was never more strikingly displayed than in the session of 1803, when the Prince of Wales' debts again occupied the attention of parliament. A more impudent, barefaced juggle was never practised on the English nation than on this occasion, when the Prince's friends rose in their places, and unblushingly declared, that the additional grant then sought for was not for the purpose of relieving his Royal Highness from his embarrassments, but merely to enable him to resume his former splendour, as becoming the heir-apparent to the throne. The most extraordinary feature, however,

of this transaction is, that whilst the Prince of Wales in his own message to the House, very gravely and candidly declared, that some debts were still pressing heavily upon him, which he was bound in justice and honour to pay, his friends, on the other hand, as gravely declared, that they should consider it as an insult to the English public to propose any fresh burden upon them for the payment of the Prince's debts; but all they wanted was an addition to his income, to enable him to live at a more riotous and extravagant rate than he had been able to do for the preceding eight years. It was, however, to Mr. Fox that the English people were indebted for a piece of information, which came rather unexpectedly upon them, which was, that the Prince, by his *prudence*, had shown himself worthy of the management of a large income, and that as prudence had been the only virtue of which he had been hitherto wanting, he might henceforth be regarded as the possessor of every virtue which can adorn a human character. There is an old adage, which says, 'save me from my friends, and I will take care of my enemies,' and in no instance was it more completely verified than in the case of the friends of the Prince of Wales. By attempting to prove a great deal, they proved the exact reverse, and although the grant was ultimately allowed, the public were not so thoroughly convinced of the prudence of his Royal Highness, nor of his attention to the commonest principles of economy.

On the 16th of February, a message from his Majesty was brought down to both Houses of Parliament, recommending the present situation of the Prince of Wales to their consideration. This message was accordingly taken into consideration in the House of Commons on the 23d, when, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole House. The debate was opened by Colonel Stanley inquiring whether it was intended to raise money for the purpose of relieving the embarrassments of the Prince, or whether this measure were not a compromise for certain claims of money which had not been appropriated to his use.

Mr. Addington denied that the present motion was founded at all on a compromise of claims, neither was it for the purpose

of paying the Prince's debts, as they had been already provided for, by a former arrangement. It was merely for the purpose of re-establishing his Royal Highness in that splendour which belonged to his rank in the state. He should, therefore, submit to them a proposition, which he trusted would have the general acquiescence of the committee, the object of which was 'to enable his Majesty to grant to the Prince of Wales the sum of 60,000*l.* annually.' His Royal Highness, in the year 1795, had an annual income of 138,000*l.*, which, considering the increase of price in everything, was not as much in proportion as 90,000*l.*, which was the establishment of the Prince of Wales above ninety years ago. He then moved, 'that it is the opinion of this committee, that his Majesty be enabled to grant yearly any sum or sums of money, out of the consolidated fund of Great Britain, not exceeding in the whole 60,000*l.*, being to be computed from the 5th of January, 1803, and to continue till the 5th of July, 1806, towards providing for the better support and dignity of the Prince of Wales.'

Mr. Manners Sutton, on rising to second the motion, stated, that although he was no longer in the service of his Royal Highness, he was still honoured with his confidence, and he would express in his name, that he felt the most sincere gratitude to his Majesty for the interest he had been pleased to take with regard to his situation, and that he submitted with cheerfulness to the wisdom and justice of the House. It was the object of the Prince to shew in all instances his sincere respect and duty to his country, and rather than at all diminish the harmony which should subsist between him and his royal father, he was content to forego every claim of right which might lead to a contest, that, whether successful or not, must be to him a source of the deepest regret. There certainly had been no compromise, nor any thing resembling it; the intimation of the present measure came upon his Royal Highness unexpectedly, and no terms were attempted to be imposed upon him. He concluded by stating, that whatever were the expenses incurred by his Royal Highness, they had not fallen on the public. In order to be convinced of that, it would be only sufficient to compare the present with former times; and the actual situation of his Royal Highness with that of his

illustrious predecessors. He concluded, by declaring that he should vote for the resolution proposed.

Sir Ralph Milbank said, that it was notorious that the Prince had lived in a state of comparative obscurity, for the last eight years, and that it was time to restore him to that state and splendour, which became his exalted rank.

Mr. Harrison objected to the manner of granting this annuity, as a boon to his Royal Highness, when it was clear that he was a creditor to the public, for more than the amount of his outstanding debts. The Solicitor-General had informed them, that legal opinions were agreed upon that subject. Although for his part, he did not think the dignity of monarchy depended upon its trappings, yet when he saw splendour in every corner of the court, and in all its appendages, he saw no reason why the Prince of Wales should be the only person from whom it was withheld.

Lord Castlereagh was of opinion last year, when this matter was first suggested, that the time was come for restoring the Prince to the full dignity and comforts which became his rank; but as the claims of the Prince then came forward in a more legal shape, it was necessary to await a legal decision. He perfectly approved, however, of the feeling which dictated that course, namely, that the Prince wished rather that his debts should be paid out of his own means, than that he should appear burdensome to the public.

Mr. Sheridan said, he preferred so much the character of his Royal Highness to his comforts, that, if this were to be represented to the public as a boon to the Prince, he was not prepared to say that he should support it. The fact was this, the Prince had, in the course of last session, applied for the restoration of his RIGHT, not on his own account, but for the sake of his creditors. The petition of right was then proceeded on, but suddenly the proceedings were stopped, and the present message came down to the House. He, therefore, thought this was a fair and honourable compromise; but he wished the House to bear in their minds, that his Royal Highness considered himself in honour and in justice bound to pay his creditors the ten per cent. which the commissioners had reduced of their demands; and until that was done, his Royal

Highness could not resume conscientiously, nor in honour, his state and dignity.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer explained this circumstance in the following manner. For all the debts which were fairly and justly due, there were given to the creditors, to accept them at their option, debentures of 100*l.* bearing three per cent. interest, or 90*l.*, bearing five per cent., those who preferred the 90*l.* could not be said to have their debt reduced, as, by law, no interest at all was due on debts which were merely book debts.

Mr. Fox said, that he conceived the account closed between the Prince and the public in 1795. In that year there were some persons who thought 125,000*l.* was too great an income to be allowed a Prince of Wales, but he was not of that number. As to the claims respecting the Duchy of Cornwall, the only way he thought they could enter into the present question was, that, in addition to the consideration that the Prince had for eight years submitted to great privations and restraints, other reasons have occurred, which strengthened his claims on the generosity of the nation. He concluded by observing, the Prince had now shown himself worthy of the management of a large income by his prudence, *which was the only virtue he was ever charged with wanting.*

The resolution moved by Mr. Addington was unanimously agreed to in the committee.

On the 25th of February, his Majesty's message was taken into consideration in the House of Lords, when Lord Pelham, after a few preliminary observations, moved an address to his Majesty, similar to that moved in the House of Commons.

Lord Carlisle seconded the motion for the address, and after a few words from Lord Moira, in praise of the conduct of his Royal Highness upon that occasion, the address was unanimously agreed to.

On the 28th February, Mr. Tyrwhitt brought down a message from the Prince of Wales, in which his Royal Highness, after expressing his gratitude for the liberality of Parliament, declared that there were still claims upon him, both in honour and justice, for the discharge of which, he must still set apart a considerable sinking fund.

Mr. Calcraft gave notice of a motion to enable his Royal Highness immediately to resume his state and dignity, which Mr. Erskine declared was without the knowledge of the Prince.

A very long and interesting debate took place on the 4th March, in the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Calcraft respecting the Prince's establishment. That gentleman began by stating, that the motion he was now to bring forward originated solely with himself, and that he had not communicated with any person on the subject, previously to his giving the notice. He said the country was anxious to see the heir-apparent resume that state and dignity due to his exalted rank, which, notwithstanding the liberal grant of Parliament, could not now be done, unless there were some arrangements made for those claims, which affected the honour and justice of the Prince, and which otherwise he must levy upon a considerable part of his income, to discharge. He therefore moved, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the extent of those claims which had been signified to the House in the message from his Royal Highness.

Sir William Geary seconded the motion.

Mr. Erskine said, that when on a former day he had asserted this motion was brought on without the knowledge of his Royal Highness, he by no means meant to say, that it was on that account improper for discussion in that house. His Royal Highness felt grateful for the kindness of his Majesty, and for the great liberality of Parliament. He was amply satisfied; and, personally, felt himself no way interested in the motion. If he, therefore, coincided in the motion, it was as a member of parliament, and not as a servant to the Prince. He was only anxious, for the honour of the Prince, that it should be known, that he had, out of his own revenues, paid within the last eight years the sum of 575,000*l.*; and that now, at forty years of age, he did not owe one shilling to the public.

Sir Robert Buxton considered, that in the present state of the country, when the taxes were so high, princes would do themselves most credit by avoiding useless expenses and idle parade. His Royal Highness knew that the dignity of a

prince consists, not in the trappings of a court, but in the virtues of the man. He therefore moved the previous question.

Mr. Curwen seconded the motion. If his Royal Highness still found himself involved in debts, it would be right of him to pay them; but he could hardly expect the public to be satisfied with a burden which might appear to them as proceeding from extravagance. He thought a committee would be inconvenient; as, if debts appear that the committee did not think fair, it was not to be supposed that Parliament would pay them.

Mr. Johnstone objected to the motion most decidedly. At a time that such large revenues were raised upon the subject, he could not consent to such an increase of the public burdens. As to the Cornwall claims, he thought the time for the Prince to urge his right was in the year 1795; but then he preferred appealing to the liberality of parliament. He said, there was another very good reason for not prosecuting this claim. The whole amount of the revenues of Cornwall, from his birth to his coming of age, was but 234,000*l.*, and the expenses were at least as much; therefore it did not appear that there would be anything coming to him out of those revenues.

Mr. H. Lascelles opposed the motion. He thought the Cornwall claims were only held over the house *in terrorem*, while indirect applications were making.

Mr. Burdon thought that, if such a committee were appointed, it would be in the awkwardest situation that ever a committee of that house was placed: it could not pretend to inquire into debts of honour, which certainly an act of parliament could not mean to consider.

Mr. Tierney voted for the Committee, but would not pledge himself to vote the payment of all sums that might be found undischarged; but, as a member of parliament, he wished to know, what the circumstances were which prevented the Prince from resuming his splendour. He contended that his Royal Highness was the least expensive Prince of Wales who had ever existed, and that 30,000*l.* was all that the public had advanced to him by extraordinary grants. If the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall were deducted, as they ought to be,

the 125,000*l.* which was assigned to the Prince in 1795, was not more than the 100,000*l.* per annum which had been given to his grandfather in 1733; he believed, considering the difference of the times, that it was not so much. He concluded with giving his hearty assent to the motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that knowing, as he did, the sentiments of His Royal Highness upon the subject, the present motion was to him rather a matter of surprise than of any other sensation. In point of regularity, no proceedings could be taken on the present motion without a previous recommendation from the crown. The message that had been sent down had nothing to do with the payment of the Prince's debts, which had been provided for by a previous arrangement. After that arrangement of 1795, it was impossible for his Majesty to conceive that any fresh debts would have been incurred, nor could the House take notice of such debts. It would be disgraceful to have entered on the journals a third proceeding for the payment of debts. He therefore opposed the motion.

Mr. Fox supported the original motion; he had himself no doubt of the validity of the claim of the Prince to an account of the revenues of Cornwall, and he did not think any one could advise his Majesty to resist them, on the ground that he had educated the Prince of Wales handsomely, and given him the same masters as his other sons, and therefore that he ought to be paid for it.

Mr. Sheridan supported the original motion with great force, and answered the objections in the happiest vein of humour. He considered that coupling the message which had been sent by his Majesty, with that which came down from his Royal Highness, the House had documents enough to see that the intentions of his Majesty could not be carried into execution on the sum now voted, and therefore it was competent to them to increase the vote: an honourable member (Mr. Johnstone) had said, that in 1795, when the spirit of jacobinism was abroad, less objections were made to increase the splendour and dignity of the royal family: this was indeed a strange principle for supporting royalty. It reminded him of the story of the conversation of the two owls in a ruined castle. One of

them said ‘ Long live King Mahmoud ! as long as he lives to carry on his devastations, we owls will never want ruined castles to build our nests in.’ The Royal Family might say on the same principle, ‘ Long live the jacobins ! as long as they exist, we shall enjoy all the splendour and dignity due to our rank ; but the moment the spirit of loyalty returns, and the love of monarchy resumes its place in the hearts of the people, we shall be thrown on the shelf.’ In reply to Sir Robert Buxton, who appeared to despise all external trappings, and think that virtue alone was the only true dignity of a prince ; he said he was ready to admit the principle, but not to confine it entirely to the heir-apparent ; for instance, if all the great officers of state would consent to rest upon their virtues, it would then be all very well ; if the Speaker, when going to present an address to his Majesty, would dispense with his gilded coach and mace, and walk to St. James’, wrapped up in his virtues and a warm surtout, with the privilege of carrying an umbrella if it should rain ; if our judges would lay aside their state, and go their circuit in the mail-coaches, and the gentlemen of the bar move as outside passengers ; if the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, instead of their gilt barges and Guildhall banquets, would come down in hackney-coaches, and dine at Dolly’s Chop-house on their return, then, indeed, it would be undoubtedly right that the Prince should conform to the prevailing customs, and lay aside all his state and splendour. Mr. Sheridan concluded by supporting Mr. Calcraft’s motion.

Lord Hawkesbury defended the arrangement, which had been proposed by ministers, in consequence of a message from his Majesty. The House could not, as members of parliament, look into any debts contracted by his Royal Highness since 1795 ; the discharge of such debts, if they existed, must be left entirely to his own honour and prudence. No new account ought now to be entered into about debt, and there was nothing in either the message or the proceedings of parliament thereon respecting the speedy re-assumption of his state.

Sir John Wrottesley and Mr. Smith spoke in favour of the motion, and Lord Castlereagh against it.

The House divided on the previous question—the ayes were 184, the noes were 139.

On the 14th of March the Prince of Wales's Annuity Bill was read a second time in the House of Lords, previously to which Lord Pelham made some observations on the length of time the Prince had lived in a state of comparative obscurity, and the universal wish that now seemed to pervade the House and the public, that he should be relieved from his difficulties.

Lord Moira stated, that on account of debts which the Prince found binding upon him, both in honour and in justice, he was prevented even now from resuming that state and dignity, but felt grateful to parliament, and content with the allowance they made him, and that he had instructed his counsel to drop the proceedings respecting Cornwall; and his Lordship, in explanation, further denied, that the abandonment of the Cornwall claims was at all the effect of compromise, for that his Royal Highness had only made that claim for the benefit of his creditors, but when he found that the allowance now proposed would enable him to satisfy his debts, without recurring to it, he abandoned it with pleasure. The bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be committed.

We have thus entered into detail on the subject of the debts of the Prince of Wales, as at that time it engrossed the attention of the public in a very particular degree, and was in other respects attended with circumstances which are strongly indicative of the political feelings of the times.

The original proposition which had been made by ministers for giving the Prince of Wales an annuity of 60,000*l.* per annum for three years was the final settlement of this important business; for in a few days after an event took place, which caused the Prince to signify to the House by Mr. Erskine, his chancellor, that he could not think at such a time of increasing further the burdens of the country, and that he was perfectly satisfied with what parliament had done.

The large division against Mr. Addington in the House of Commons, which was the greatest he had yet encountered, sufficiently manifested that the sense of the House was with the Prince of Wales, and the public beheld in the minister's conduct on this occasion either a mysterious ambiguity, or a low spirit of chicane equally unworthy of the high situation which he filled. It was recollected with surprise, that admi-

nistration had refused to entertain, in the course of the last session of Parliament, a proposition for considering the amount of his Royal Highness' claims as the creditor of the public ; and the reference he proposed to make upon them to the judgment and wisdom of the legislation, on the ground that the matter was one solely for the decision of a court of law, and not for that of Parliament. However strongly this opinion might be combated, and it was carried by a very small majority, the inference was obvious. In consequence of which, his Royal Highness had prepared a petition of right, which was submitted to the Lord Chancellor, and his claims were ready to be finally determined by the issue of a solemn adjudication, when, on a sudden, the administration, as if fearful of the result of such an inquiry, and desirous of quashing all further proceedings, came forward with a specific proposition, or rather compromise for increasing his Royal Highness' income by an annuity of 60,000*l.* per annum for three years ; specifically however, premising, that this sum was given in order to restore him to the state and splendour belonging to his rank, which, it was well known, he had for eight years voluntarily forgone, by the diminution of his establishment more than one-half, in order that his creditors might be finally satisfied. In the same spirit of acquiescence to the King's government, which, in the course of this business, had already distinguished the whole of his conduct, and now, as then, equally averse from the indelicacy of a suit with the crown, the Prince cheerfully announced his acceptance of the proposed sum with eagerness and with gratitude, and waived for ever an investigation, which it was the decided conviction of himself and his great law officers, would have placed him in the desirable situation of appearing, what he really was, the creditor, not the debtor, of the public. But in the acceptance of this increase of income, his Royal Highness wished it expressly to be understood, that in consequence of the reduction he had submitted to for more than eight years, some incumbrances had gradually increased upon him, which, superadded to the payment of those debts not provided for by the arrangement of 1795, but which he found himself bound in honour to discharge, would yet further delay the reassumption of the state and dignity of the heir-apparent

to the imperial crown of these realms; unless Parliament should inquire into those embarrassments, and adopt the most effectual means of relieving them as speedily as possible, and that therefore the sum, which he took in the same spirit in which it was given, namely, as a satisfaction for foregoing the further prosecution of his claims, was still insufficient for the purposes for which it was alleged to be granted. For this purpose, the motion was made which gave rise to the debate which we have just detailed, and which was supported by all the talent, wit, and ingenuity of the House. Mr. Addington, however, brought the usual strength of the ministerial members to bear upon the subject, and it was lost, there being 328 members in the House, by the slender majority of 45. Nor did the minister retire from the contest with any increase of credit or reputation; it was not forgotten that after driving the Prince of Wales to the necessity, which he actually deprecated in the face of the nation by his minister's declaration in the former session, of a suit-at-law with his Royal father, that he deliberately checked the course of public justice by the offer of what could only be considered a compromise. Nor was this all; far from allowing it to be, what in fact it was, the price of the relinquishment of a legal investigation, which was dreaded, he sought, under the specious pretence of a boon to the Prince of Wales, to call it the means by which the splendour and dignity of this august personage would be restored. Yet, when the fallacy and utter impossibility of the attainment of this desirable end being accomplished without an inquiry into the actual state of the Prince's affairs was stated, he obstinately refused to entertain such an inquiry, and persisted in giving the appearance of increased obligation, to what was, in fact, unjust in its principles, unsatisfactory both to the Prince and to the public, and totally inadequate to the proposed ends. Such, however, is the usual fate of the half measures of little minds.

Contrasted with this line of conduct, the people observed in the whole of that of their future monarch, dignity, equity, and moderation, and when it was seen, that at the critical and awful moment we have already alluded to, he declined giving any further trouble to the great council of the nation, that in such a moment he could not think of adding to the burdens of

the country, and that he declared himself perfectly satisfied with the liberality of Parliament, gratitude and admiration universally prevailed, and his future subjects beheld in this meritorious and exemplary conduct, ample promise of the greatest blessing providence can bestow—a Patriot King.

On the 15th the House of Peers resolved itself into a committee on the Prince of Wales' annuity bill.

The Earl of Carlisle was still of opinion, that this bill was inadequate to the object it professed; but in the present circumstances, it was perhaps better to be silent on that subject. The bill was read a third time without further opposition and passed.

In the year 1804 a strong altercation took place between the King and the Prince of Wales, respecting the education of the Princess Charlotte; the Prince insisted that the mother was an improper companion for the daughter, and resolved that she should be confided to his sole management. The King, on the contrary, maintained that the Prince of Wales was an improper person to have the charge of his own child, and insisted upon the right of the mother. The Prince remonstrated with him, and pronounced the line which the King had taken to be an insult to him. His Majesty, however, was firm, and became himself the guardian of the child.

This topic engaged at this time much of the public attention. In the reign of George I., a question was submitted to the judges, whether the reigning sovereign had the right of directing the education, and disposing in marriage, of his grand-children. Ten of the judges at that period were of opinion, that the right was invested in the King, but two of them dissented, and gave their reasons why they thought that the King had the right to dispose in marriage, but not to the care and education of his grandchildren, which belonged to the Prince, their father. However, the opinions of the majority of the judges prevailed, and from the time of George I. to the present day, it has been held part of the royal prerogative, and accordingly was so acted upon when the education of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales came under deliberation. The Prince of Wales remonstrated on the subject as became him, both as a father and a man; but all his

objections were overruled by prerogative. It is, perhaps, not unworthy of remark, that in the House of Brunswick the enmity between the parents and their eldest sons appears to be hereditary ; and from certain circumstances we are inclined to date it earlier than the dissensions between the three Georges. The malignant antipathy of George I. to his son betrayed a callousness of heart revolting to nature, and a grovelling suspicion disgraceful to a manly character. The quarrel between George II. and his son resembled, in its causes, very much that which in the after reign took place between George III. and his son. It was both private and political ; but the two quarrels had this difference, that the first originated in an expostulation of the son with the father, on the mal-appropriation of the funds of the civil list, and the wanton extravagance displayed in various departments of the household ; and the latter originated in an expostulation of the father with the son, on the immorality of his habits, and the amount of his debts contracted by profusion and libertinism.

On the subject of the Prince of Wales not being allowed the education of his own daughter, a writer of that day, in vindication of his Royal Highness, says, ‘ We should be glad to know by what legal process the Prince’s daughter is to be taken from him. We do not mean to say, that the nation has not such a superior interest in the royal family, particularly those who are immediately allied to the succession, that the care and education of them, as well as their marriages, may call for specific regulations. But positive law has done nothing to transfer the care and education of the children of the Prince of Wales to his father. No act of parliament has done it, and surely we are not to be amused with second-hand civil law from Bracton and Fleta. It is not easy to see good reasons for such transference, unless it be thought important to make a transfer also of filial duty and affection. Nothing but strong particular reasons could possibly justify the taking of the Princess Charlotte from his care ; for the very transference must be founded upon the supposition of error or misconduct in him, and with prejudices so excited, perhaps artfully encouraged, it might not be easy afterwards to reconcile the filial reverence, obedience, and duty of the child. A Prince of Wales must

always be most permanently interested in the good education and the proper tuition of his child ; and it never can be his part to imbue the mind of infancy with prejudices against his own character. Even if the strict right do most unquestionably exist, as we think it certainly does not, we should consider it one of those rights which ought to lie dormant till they are called forth as remedial of some great evil. But we should be glad to know why the Prince of Wales is to be so stultified and so stigmatized, as to be held forth to the country and to Europe, as unworthy to have the direction of his own daughter's education? The Prince of Wales seems actually to be the object of every species of insult. At one time he is told, that during a temporary suspension of the royal authority, any man in the kingdom had just as good a right as he to the regency. At another time he is refused a command in the army above that of a colonel of dragoons, though the country is supposed to be on the point of invasion ; and, last of all, his own daughter is to be taken out of his hands, as if he had neither capacity, virtue, nor natural affection to enable, or to prompt him, to perform the duty of an intelligent father. If such things do not tend to degrade a character, and to bring into question all that is most valuable to the most ordinary individual, far more to the Prince of Wales, we do not know what more successful arts of detraction can be practised. We cannot conceive, therefore, that those who advise the assertion of such a right as has been claimed, can be actuated by proper motives. There can be no pretence that such a right is now necessary for the good education of the Princess Charlotte, and for the advantage of the public. On the contrary, there are the most manifest and undeniable reasons against the exercise of such a right, did it exist. If his Majesty claims the right, he must be surrounded by very pernicious councillors, and against these councillors the public indignation should be directed. Those who wish well to the hereditary succession of this monarchy, ought seriously to consider whether the principle has not of late been too much sacrificed. Those who would overthrow the monarchy altogether, could not forward their designs more effectually, than by disgracing, mortifying, and calumniating those who, in the natural course of events, will be called to reign.'

It requires but a very small portion of skill to penetrate into the speciousness of these arguments, the general tendency of which goes to prove that the Prince of Wales was gifted with those virtues which are considered to be requisite towards the education of children, and that he was, in other respects, well fitted for the task, by a due and rigid observance of those moral duties which belong to the character of a preceptor. It is a trite maxim, that example is better than precept, and certainly nothing yet has been delineated in the character of his Royal Highness, nor in that of his immediate associates, which could induce those persons to believe, who were most deeply interested in the education of the Princess Charlotte, that any example which could be set before her eyes, as emanating from the conduct of her father, could be productive of instilling into her mind any fixed notions of virtue and morality. It is certainly true, that the Prince of Wales declared at a public dinner, that his daughter should be educated in the political opinions of those who had been his earliest and most valued associates; and in that isolated case some credit is due to his Royal Highness, as those opinions are certainly the most congenial to the spirit of the British constitution; but in regard to private character, what could be expected from the example which would be daily exhibited to her under the roof of her father. Female prostitution on one side, and male libertinism on the other—on one hand, she would have been obliged to associate with the Jerseys, the Hopes, and other ladies of that grade—with the very women who had lighted the flame of discord in the house of her father—and, on the other hand, with that father himself, who had expelled her mother from his house, to wanton in the meretricious charms of sordid concubines. It may be alleged against these remarks, that if the education of the Princess Charlotte had been confided to her father, it does not follow that she would have been exposed to such contaminating influences, and that her exalted rank in life would have entitled her to a separate establishment, where it would not have been possible for her to have come into contact with such scenes of profligacy; and further, it may be urged, that instances are by no means rare in human life, in which a profligate parent has educated his child in the

strictest precepts of virtue and religion ; but these objections, applicable as they may be in certain cases, have no force when considered in reference to the education of the Princess Charlotte. His natural affection for his daughter, which he manifested on every occasion but *one*, but that one was, of all others that, when it should have been the most unremittingly displayed, might have propelled him to have watched over her education with all the care and anxiety of the most virtuous parent ; but it should be recollected, that the Prince of Wales was not an independent agent : continually subject to the control and influence of some favourite concubine, or some fawning parasite, he was obliged to regulate his conduct according to their dictum ; a dangerous interference might have been practised in the change of preceptors, and notions instilled into the mind of the Princess Charlotte, which, had it pleased heaven to spare her to ascend the throne, might have struck at the root of the welfare and prosperity of the country. We, therefore, cannot but applaud the firmness which was displayed by George III. on this occasion, and the choice which he made of the preceptors of his grand-daughter was an evident proof of his parental anxiety to instil into her mind the soundest principles of virtue, religion, and morality.

The following circumstance forms, however, a strong contrast with the foregoing, and which, in its leading features, is of so singular a nature, that no wonder need be excited at the extreme interest which it occasioned at the time, and the extraordinary construction which was put upon it by the scribblers and gossips of the day. We allude to the suit in Chancery respecting the guardianship of Miss Seymour, in which, although the Prince of Wales was only a collateral party, his feelings were supposed, notwithstanding, to be as nearly concerned as those of any other person. The question on which the Court of Chancery was called to pronounce was, whether the infant daughter of the late Lord Hugh Seymour should remain under the guardianship of Mrs. Fitzherbert, to whose care she had been intrusted by her mother, Lady Horatia Seymour, almost from the hour of her birth ; or whether she should be placed under the care of the same guardians as the other children of Lord Hugh and Lady Horatia ?

It appeared from the affidavits exhibited in the Court of Chancery, during the progress of the suit, that both Lord Hugh and Lady Horatia Seymour wished their daughter to remain under the protection of Mrs. Fitzherbert; but as this was not legally provided for in the will of Lord Hugh, who was the survivor, it was contended by the guardians of his other children that it was improper to permit Miss Seymour to remain in the hands of a Roman Catholic, lest, while she continued under such guardianship, her religious principles should be subverted.

Some wholesome old statutes (thanks to the liberality and moderation of the times, now become obsolete) provide that no Protestant child shall be intrusted to the care of a Roman Catholic guardian, unless the Protestant relations next of kin shall thereunto consent; and these statutes, in the case of Miss Seymour, were attempted to be enforced. It was shown in evidence that Lady Horatia Seymour, one of the most virtuous and accomplished, as she was one of the most lovely women of her age, on her death had bequeathed her youngest daughter to the care of Mrs. Fitzherbert, who, on account of Lady Horatia's ill health, had had the rearing of the child from her infancy, and with all the solemnity of a dying request, conjured the Prince of Wales to see that her last wishes were carried into effect.

It is not possible to conceive a scene more solemn and affecting than that which was proved on oath to have passed between the Prince of Wales and Lady Horatia Seymour, a few hours before her decease. Worn out by that insatiable and unconquerable scourge of English beauty, a pulmonary consumption, her Ladyship sent for his Royal Highness a few hours previously to her dissolution, and, in the most earnest and pressing terms, conjured him to watch over the future safety of her daughter, who was then, and had been almost from her birth, under the care of Mrs. Fitzherbert. The Prince, deeply affected with the scene, promised to comply with her Ladyship's request, and, on the death of Lord Hugh Seymour, took upon himself the whole charge of maintaining and educating the orphan, so that her own fortune, which was but narrow, might accumulate for her future benefit.

It ought to be mentioned that Lord Hugh Seymour, who was an admiral, and commanded a squadron at Jamaica, died in that station subsequently to Lady Horatia, but without receiving intelligence of her Ladyship's death. By his will, he bequeathed the guardianship of his children to his lady, so that had Lady Horatia survived him but a single day, she might have left the guardianship of her daughter to whom she pleased, without any one having a right to interfere.

It appeared clearly in evidence that the child had been placed under the protection of Mrs. Fitzherbert with the perfect concurrence and approbation of Lord Hugh Seymour, which concurrence and approbation, considering the very questionable relation in which that lady stood with the Prince of Wales, reflect no great credit upon the prudence and judgment of his Lordship. It was also proved that his Lordship had frequently expressed the utmost gratitude for the tenderness which Mrs. Fitzherbert had shown to his daughter; and there appeared no reason whatever to suppose that he would have changed the dispositions which his lady had made, respecting their child, on her death-bed.

It appeared, further, that Miss Seymour was a child of an extremely delicate constitution, that she had been with great difficulty reared, but that in all probability her life would be endangered, were she to be removed out of the hands of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and committed to the care of another person.

The only answer that was made to all this, and, indeed, the sole objection to Miss Seymour's remaining under the protection of Mrs. Fitzherbert, was that, that lady being a Roman Catholic, the religious principles of her Protestant ward might be endangered. In reply to this, Mrs. Fitzherbert put in an affidavit, denying that she was actuated by any spirit of proselytism, or had any desire to convert her ward; on the contrary, that she was determined to educate her according to the religious principles of her noble parents. An affidavit of the Prince of Wales to the same effect was read in court, and another of the Bishop of Winchester, who, by-the-by, appears at this time to have been the most complaisant of the whole mitred fraternity, in which his Lordship deposed that he had

examined Miss Seymour touching her religious instruction, and found that she had received regular lessons on the subject from a clergyman of the Church of England, and was as well and properly instructed in the fundamentals of the Protestant faith, as it was possible for a young person of her age to be.

We know not, in the whole range of human society, a more execrable character than that of a time-serving priest, a man of holiness and sanctity, who, for the sake of present or future emolument, will truckle at the feet of his superiors, and be ready at their command to further their designs, however deep those designs may be steeped in infamy and vice. Whatever the worthy Father in God may have been called upon by his royal patron to depose to, we know that in some particulars his depositions were not consistent with the truth, for he could not have been ignorant that Miss Seymour, although professedly educated in the Protestant religion, was still artfully worked upon by all the imposing ceremonies of the Romish Church—that she was an eye-witness of the celebration of all its splendid ordinances—and that, as a resident under the roof of a Catholic, she was necessarily obliged to submit to all the fasts and penances enjoined by the superstition and fanaticism of the Mother Church; not that we mean to infer that, in a house like that of Mrs. Fitzherbert, the forms of the Romish Church were rigidly observed, or that, in some particulars, they were observed at all; but to depose that a Protestant female, living in a Roman Catholic family, exposed to all the intrigues and stratagems of a crafty priesthood, can remain uncontaminated with their prejudices, or averse from adopting their opinions, would be just as near the truth as to depose that a horse-chestnut and a chestnut horse were one and the same thing. It was not, however, with the religious education of Miss Seymour that the gossiping part of the English people chiefly interested themselves; but some strange rumours got afloat, as to the actual relationship of Miss Seymour to her alleged parents; and it was darkly hinted that that young lady was more closely related to her guardian than the world knew of; indeed, the extraordinary exertions, which were made to retain the guardianship, afforded fresh materials for the support of that suspicion, involving, at the same time, the

character of the Prince of Wales. It was positively stated that the Miss Seymour living under the protection of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and concerning whom the Prince of Wales so strongly interested himself, was not the actual child of Lord and Lady Horatia Seymour, but that, with the privity and concurrence of those individuals, the child was sent to Mrs. Fitzherbert as their own; whereas, it was the real offspring of the illicit connexion between that lady and the Prince of Wales. Many cogent reasons could be given for the invalidation of that statement; but the extraordinary exertions made to retain the child, which could not be exceeded by parental affection itself, gave some colouring to the floating suspicions, and tended in no degree to abate the virulence with which the character of the Prince of Wales was at this time assailed.

Whoever has had the patience or the curiosity to peruse one half of the defamatory productions which were published against the Prince of Wales, from the year 1783 to the time almost of the Regency, will have ran through a tolerable number of volumes, and may be able to form a competent judgment of the licentiousness of the press which existed at that period. Censure, as Swift justly observes, is the tax a man pays for being eminent; but it should be mentioned to the honour of his Royal Highness, that he never considered one of these scribblers worthy of his personal resentment, in fact, in one or two instances in which the libellers of the Prince were prosecuted, it was, we have reason to believe, much against the inclination of his Royal Highness; and in this place we cannot forbear mentioning an anecdote of the Prince of Wales, which it must be admitted, even by his adversaries, reflects high honour on his feelings and considerate delicacy. A person, who was convicted of a libel on the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, but not at the prosecution of their Royal Highnesses, was sentenced by the Court to stand in the pillory opposite the Horse Guards. On the morning on which that part of the sentence was to be carried into execution, it happened that the Prince of Wales, perfectly unacquainted with the circumstance, rode past the spot where the pillory was erected, and was detained by the crowd some moments in sight of the offender. Such an occurrence as this,

though purely accidental, might have been construed to the disadvantage of his Royal Highness, as an illiberal triumph over a fallen enemy, and therefore, the next day, the Prince sent one of his servants to the individual to apologize for the seeming indelicacy of his being present on the occasion, by shewing that it was owing to mere accident.

The above is a trait of character which will go far to redeem many venial errors; but perhaps in the composition of no individual was good and evil more strongly amalgamated, than in that of the Prince of Wales. He could exhibit himself at one time a Colossus of virtue, standing upon an eminence which few would essay to reach; and at another, sinking into an abyss of profligacy characteristic of the most degenerate reprobate. At one time he could be the Prince—‘every inch a Prince’—at another he could condescend to converse with his inferiors, on terms of the utmost urbanity and familiarity; a stronger instance of which cannot be given, than in the following anecdote of Papiera, the manufacturer of plaster-casts.

When his Royal Highness was between the age of thirty and forty, his mask was taken in plaster of Paris, by Papiera, an Italian, from which, if we mistake not, the bust by Mr. Banks was modelled. The operation, even when executed by the most skilful, is not very agreeable, to say the least of it. Sometimes the plaster is apt to adhere to the skin, and had such a circumstance occurred with this illustrious personage, the dilemma would have been of serious consequence perhaps to the operator. ‘How long, think you, will it require to produce the mask?’ inquired the Prince; ‘Five minutes, Sir,’ was the answer. ‘Well, then,’ said the Prince, ‘we shall see;’ so, looking at his watch, he shewed the time to Papiera, laid it upon the table, and kindly added, ‘Do not hurry yourself, for I am not impatient, and I wish you to perform your task well.’ Papiera, to use his own words, observed, ‘So gracious and condescending was the manner of his Royal Highness, that I went to my work without embarrassment, and completed it within the time.’ The Prince expressed his satisfaction at the skill with which it was performed, and entered into familiar chat with the plaster-caster. ‘What is your height, Papiera?’ asked his Royal Highness; ‘I think you are as near as may

be to my stature.' Papiera, answered, 'I believe your Royal Highness has the advantage.' 'Come,' said the Prince, 'let us measure;' when placing him against the wall, he unsheathed a small sword and with the point made the mark. 'Now,' said he, turning to Lord Moira, who was present, 'mark my height; but do it fairly, my Lord.' The point was fixed, and Papiera proved himself, though a courtier, yet no flatterer, for his Royal Highness had the advantage by half an inch. This courtesy of the Prince extended itself to the ingenious of all classes who had the least personal intercourse with him. Papiera, be it known, was of no higher rank in the arts than a manufacturer of plaster-casts.

As a contrast to the above we will insert another anecdote, which, although it happened at a remoter period of his life, will shew, that even when he was a king, decked with all the trappings of royalty, he could take even a reproof without considering his dignity insulted.

Previously to Mathews leaving this country for America, he exhibited a selection from his popular entertainments, by command of his Majesty, at Carlton Palace. A select party of not more than six or eight persons were present, including the Princess Augusta, and the Marchioness of Conyngham. During the entertainment, with which his Majesty seemed much delighted, Mathews introduced his imitations of various performers on the British Stage, and was proceeding with John Kemble, in the *Stranger*, when he was interrupted by the King, who, in the most affable manner, observed, that his general imitations were excellent, and such as no one who had ever seen the characters could fail to recognise; but he thought the comedian's portrait of John Kemble somewhat too boisterous. 'He is an old friend, and I might add, a tutor of mine,' observed his Majesty; 'when I was Prince of Wales, he often favoured me with his company. I will give you an imitation of John Kemble,' said the good-humoured Monarch. 'May I request your attention,' said the King to his attendants, peers and lords, who stood near the sofa, on which he and the ladies were seated. Mathews was electrified. The lords of the bedchamber eyed each other with surprise. The King rose, and prefaced his imitation by observing, 'I once requested

John Kemble to take a pinch of snuff with me, and for that purpose placed my box on the table before him, saying, "Kemble, oblige (*obleege*) me by taking a pinch of snuff." He took a pinch, and then addressed me thus :—(Here his Majesty assumed the peculiar carriage of Mr. Kemble)—‘ I thank your Royal Highness for your snuff, but in future do extend your Royal jaws a little wider, and say, OBLIGE.’ The anecdote was given with the most powerful similitude to the actor’s voice and manner, and had an astonishing effect on the party present.

At times he would even be jocular on subjects of serious import, and especially on one which others could not, and dare not mention, without encountering one of those deep impressive frowns of displeasure, which were so much his peculiar characteristic in his later years.

When the two Owyhee chiefs were introduced to him at Carlton Palace, he was much amused with their conversation, through an interpreter, and he asked them a good many questions ; among other things the elder chief told him he had *six wives*, after which his Majesty good humouredly observed, ‘ Notwithstanding which you left your country ! Well I have but *one*, and I find that enough to manage.’

To return to the affair of Miss Seymour. As in the majority of cases where prudence gets the better of the spirit of litigation, and knowing that publicity only tends to expose both parties to contempt if not to odium, the affair of Miss Seymour was taken out of Court, and referred to the arbitration of the head of Miss Seymour’s family, the Marquess of Hertford. Of the decision of that nobleman, no particulars transpired ; but it may be presumed that it was not unfavourable to the guardianship of Mrs. Fitzherbert, as Miss Seymour continued under the protection of that lady ; but it was publicly remarked, that submitting the case to the arbitration of the Marquess of Hertford was the same thing as submitting it to the Prince of Wales himself, as that nobleman was then beginning to bask in the beams of royal favour, from a cause which will be explained in its proper place.

In the early part of the year 1804, the Prince of Wales had an opportunity of evincing his sincere regard for one of his warmest and most confidential friends. On the death of

Lord Elliot, the office of Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall became vacant, and it was immediately bestowed by the Prince of Wales upon Mr. Sheridan, 'as a trifling proof of that sincere friendship his Royal Highness had always professed and felt for him through a long series of years.' His Royal Highness also added, in the same communication, the very cordial words, 'I wish to God it was better worth your acceptance.'

Who is there that has turned over the pages of the history of the female sex, and has not been wrapt in admiration at the many acts displayed of conjugal heroism, in which the female appears to soar above the sphere of her nature, and, in defiance of the most appalling dangers, becomes the victim to the force of her affection? Who is there, that whilst reverencing and almost adoring the character of a Lavalette, does not see that woman, notwithstanding the natural weakness of her sex, is able, under the influence of love, to accomplish a deed, which sets at nought the boasted exploits of man, and places him as it were in the second rank of greatness and of virtue.

Perhaps few females are more richly deserving of the above encomium, than the once celebrated Lady Massarene, the avowed favourite of the Prince of Wales, and who bestowed upon him all the force of her affection, to be treated like the majority of his other favourites, with the most cruel neglect and indifference. The history of this celebrated woman is of a truly romantic character, and had she had the good fortune to have bestowed her *first love* on an object worthy of her, or who could have appreciated the value of her transcendent virtues, she would have shone in the world as one of the brightest luminaries in the galaxy of the female sex.

Beauty is with the most apt similitude, and we may say with the most literal truth, called a flower that fades and dies almost in the very moment of its maturity. Yet there is, we know, a kind of beauty which lives even to old age—a beauty that is not *in* the features, but which, if we may be allowed the expression, *shines through them*. Such was the beauty which shone *through* the features of Lady Massarene, even when the beauty that was *in* the features had given way to the ravages of age. As that beauty is not merely *corporeal*, it is not the

object of mere *sense*, nor is it to be discovered but by persons of fine taste and refined sentiment. There are strokes of sensibility, mere touches of delicacy, sense, and even virtue, which, like the master traits in a fine picture, are not to be discerned by vulgar eyes, which are captivated with vivid colours and gaudy decorations. There are emanations of the mind, which, like the vital spirit of heavenly fire, animate the form of beauty with a living soul. Without this the most perfect symmetry in the bloom of youth is but a kneaded clod ; and with this, the features, that time itself has defaced, have a spirit, a sensibility, an inexpressible charm, which those only do not admire who want faculties to perceive.

It may be said, that of all the females who were captivated with the handsome person and fascinating manners of the Prince of Wales, there were few who remained until their death more sincerely attached to him than Lady Massarene. Of the precise manner in which his Royal Highness succeeded in his amour with Lady Massarene, we have not been able to discover any authentic data ; on her side, however, it was one of the warmest affection—on his a mere transient ebullition of passion—burning for a time with a Vesuvian ardour, and then sinking into coldness and inanity.

Lady Massarene was a native of France, and daughter of the keeper of the prison in Paris, in which Lord Massarene had been confined for debt for several years. As persons of condition in France, under the old regime, were not ashamed of the office of gaoler, nor were in consequence of their filling that odious situation deprived of the association of the higher classes, no detriment accrued to the beautiful daughter of the gaoler, in the extent of her education, nor of her intercourse with the more polished classes of society. Compassion is the nurse of Love. Lord Massarene, during his confinement, excited the compassion of the lovely girl : she gave him her love, worthless and vicious as he was, and they were married in the year 1786. By some it has been said that it was the rank of Lord Massarene which the gaoler's daughter coveted, for that to love him was impossible. To judge, however, by her subsequent actions, she must have been ruled by an almost enthusiastic attachment, or she never would

have braved those dangers for him, which place her name in the same scroll with that of a Lavalette, or a Matilda of Tuscany.

If the heart of Lord Massarene had not been as impervious to the feelings of gratitude as marble is to the rays of the sun, he must have discovered the inestimable value which he possessed in the heart of his wife, in her meritorious attempt to release him from prison, and which would have terminated successfully, had not, just at the moment of its accomplishment, the flooring given way which she had undermined from a house contiguous to the prison, and which, being detected, she nearly escaped the forfeiture of her life.

This affair became soon known to the public, through the proceedings instituted by the fiscal; and at such a moment, when the revolutionary spirit was on the eve of bursting forth, was enthusiastically applauded by the people, who, in 1792, on the memorable 14th of July, conducted her Ladyship to the gates of the Bastille, where she animated the people with the most invincible courage, until the Governor surrendered.

This was the first step to a still nobler action, which evinced one of the highest traits of conjugal affection, by making use of her popularity to release her husband, the gates of whose prison were forced, and Lord Massarene liberated, at the hazard of her own life.

After such heroic actions, Lady Massarene might have fairly anticipated the applause of her country and the gratitude of her husband; but the latter basely withdrew himself from France, without giving her the slightest intimation of his design, leaving her without any pecuniary means, either to perish upon the theatre of her intrepidity, or to find her way to England in the best possible manner she was able. At last, on reaching this country, she found that Lord Massarene had departed for Ireland, where her fame had already reached, and which was rewarded by the generous Irish with the utmost respect and distinction, although the noble Lord himself scarcely acknowledged the connexion, and treated his generous liberator with the greatest indifference.

On Lord Massarene leaving Ireland for England, his lady accompanied him; but he had not been long a resident in this

country, before he was thrown into the King's Bench prison, where he would have been reduced to the most abject misery, but for the generosity and humanity of his ill-treated wife. Fortunately for Lord Massarene, a settlement which he made upon her of 500*l.* a year, out of the wreck of his fortune, enabled her to support him in prison, even when the irregularity of the Irish agents threatened to involve her personally in distress and difficulties.

At the period of which we are now speaking, Lady Massarene possessed a finely-formed person, brilliant eyes, and a countenance beaming with sensibility and expression. Of course she soon became an object of attraction to the voluptuous and the dissipated ; but she was excessively reserved in granting her favours, for selfishness formed no part of her character, and she rejected all emolument and lucre, where she could not give her heart. The Prince of Wales' jackals, being always on the alert, prowling in quest of their prey for the royal voluptuary, were not long in discovering the beauty of Lady Massarene, and the usual expedients were put in force to obtain possession of it. It was at Mrs. Howe's, in St. James'-place, where the first negotiation took place for the transfer of Lady Massarene to the temporary affections of his Royal Highness ; and as her Ladyship had actually imbibed a strong affection for his person, the negotiation was not of long duration. On his part, however, the attachment was capricious and transient ; it was marked with all the fickleness and inconstancy which were so glaringly apparent in all his other amours, and he soon discarded Lady Massarene to make way for another whose chief recommendation was that of novelty, without, perhaps, possessing a single good quality to render the conquest desirable.

Lady Massarene, however, was a woman who deserved to be beloved ; nor was it until she had obtained the most disgusting proofs of the gross and sensual appetites of Lord Massarene, that she became enamoured of the Prince, and even then her passion was regulated by an exterior deportment the most becoming, and habits of the greatest delicacy and propriety. Courage, constancy, and devotion were elementary parts of her character ; in fact, her strong fidelity seemed

doomed, in the two connexions which she made in England, to be treated with neglect by the highest, while, in the person of her husband, she was disgraced by the lowest of mankind.

Of the general opinion which was entertained at this time of character of the Prince of Wales, the following extracts from the celebrated letters of Neptune and Gracchus, addressed to his Royal Highness, will afford a striking evidence. Of the author of these letters, which, in their style and boldness of expression, bear a strong resemblance to the Letters of Junius, many rumours were at the time afloat: the most prevalent opinion, however, was that they were from the pen of Sir Philip Francis, to whom the Letters of Junius have also been ascribed. Their general tenor is vituperative of Mr. Fox; and to him is attributed all the political offences which the Prince of Wales committed, and especially the dissension which existed between his Royal Highness and his illustrious father.

‘Your dishonourable intimacy with the most profligate characters in the kingdom, has not only excited an alarm among all ranks of people at home, but it has become the common table conversation of every *petit cabaret* in Europe, where you are censured more for your want of pride than your want of prudence; and while foreigners behold, with scorn and astonishment, the heir to the crown of Great Britain degrading himself below the level of even the meanest of his worthless companions, your fellow-citizens lament, with the most affectionate concern, your obstinate attachment to men who have long since forfeited every pretension to the confidence of their country, and who have neither talents nor integrity equal to the employments which they audaciously demand.

‘A momentary reflection would be sufficient to awaken you to a sense of your situation; but your associates, aware of the danger of leaving you to yourself, have artfully contrived to keep you in the vortex of dissipation, lest a lucid interval should restore you from the delirium of pleasure to the exercise of your understanding.

‘In the black catalogue of their aggravated guilt, the infamy of playing off the son against the father is not the least criminal

and injurious. It is perfectly consistent with their principles, and favourable to their designs, to render the *former* a dupe to their artifices, and the *latter* a cipher in his dominions; but as millions are involved in your fate, it is impossible but the clamours of the multitude must force their way through the sturdy and beggarly phalanx with which you have guarded Carlton House, and compel you to acknowledge a truth which filial duty, independent of every political obligation, ought to have suggested to you.

In one of the letters of Gracchus, addressed at this period to the Prince of Wales, on his general mode of life, are the following energetic passages:—

‘It has been said, and I fear by some of your intimates, I will not call them friends, with a treachery unparalleled, that a narrow selfishness is the motive of all your actions; that the gratification of the moment is the sole purpose of your existence; yet it remains with you to counteract the malice of such assertions. Let your mind only correspond with the comeliness of your person, and the nobleness of your countenance; be but half as active in acquiring esteem as you have been in losing it, and you will rise to a height of splendour as incomparable as uncommon.

‘But let us examine in what, hitherto, your activity has been shown, what have been your Herculean labours. The inquiry is too odious; they would better suit a Silenus or a Satyr. *The history of your own time, if comprised in a volume, would, perhaps, be curious; but the recitals it would contain, instead of tinging your cheek with the glow of vanity, ought rather to crimson them with shame, and cover you with confusion.* Can a Prince of Wales place the point of excellence on such mean endeavours? Debauchery and dissipation distinguish only in proportion as they consign to censure. Let even that idea check your progress towards imperfection, a progress which has hitherto increased with the rapidity of a comet in its approach to the sun.

‘If, Sir, your pursuit of women, the most meritorious occupation of your life, had been marked with sentiment or affection in any instance, we might probably, in some degree, have approved your conduct; had you never boasted when you

failed, the world would have less condemned you when successful : but though you can only talk of conquests, there are others who mention defeats.'

It is well known that none can give so accurate an account of any errors or follies as those who have themselves been subject to them, or, at least, connected with some that have. They know the *fort* and the *foible*, the *pour* and the *contre*, to the latter of which may be traced all the vices and virtues by which an individual is distinguished. They know, and they only know because they have *felt*, what was the charm that fascinated, the attraction that drew, and the tie that bound ; they therefore can best describe, and most effectually expose them. Who for instance could so effectually expose the fopperies and mummeries of Popery, as a converted papist ? Who can so well describe the intrigues of a court, as those who either by choice or necessity are doomed to inhale its baneful atmosphere ? We have indeed lived removed from it, but we have lived with those who have passed their lives in it, who have drawn aside and exposed to our view the secret machinery, the motives and the ends of the motley group, which from the monarch himself, to the lowest of his menials, swarm within its precincts. In the delineation of those characters, the greatest danger lies of falling into caricature, and instead of giving a portrait drawn by the hand of the master, a coarse daubing of some mis-shapen figure is exhibited, which cannot be recognised as 'born either of Heaven or earth,' but as some vile abortion of the artist's own imagination. It is a most difficult task, in the delineation of character, to catch the man when his *real self* is exhibited, when the disguise, which the relations of society into which he may have been thrown, is laid aside, and the whole nakedness is presented with all its imperfections and deformities. It may appear paradoxical, but it is nevertheless founded in truth, that the same quality may be delightful in one man and disgusting in another ; one man may have a light that wants a shade, another a shade that wants a light ; the difficulty lies in giving the due proportion to each, and thereby rendering the portrait true and faithful.

It does not require the rod of the *domine* to whip into us the truth of the axiom, that a man is known by the society that he

keeps ; and if we measure the quantum of virtue which the Prince of Wales possessed, by that which his associates exhibited, the result will not be very favourable to the character of his Royal Highness. It must be allowed that, as fame and reputation are intimately connected with personal associations, they necessarily become a subject of the gravest import in the portraiture of the character of any individual ; but much more so in that of a Prince, and that Prince standing in the exalted station of heir-apparent to the throne. It cannot, however, be denied that the Prince of Wales was at one time surrounded by a halo of talent, unexampled in the history of any ancient or modern Prince ; it is of the use, or, more properly speaking, the abuse which he made of the inestimable advantages arising from such a society, that we complain ; and that whilst the highly-talented individual was attempting to enrich the mind of his Royal Highness with the soundest principles of moral and political knowledge, his sensual companions were debauching and degrading him to a level with the most depraved and profligate members of society.

It is not consistent with our plan to enter deeply into the causes of the rise or fall of nations, as originating from the influence of their Monarchs or their Princes ; but it is nevertheless an observation founded on the truest philosophy, that the history of nations records little else than cases of injustice, usurpation, and cruelty. The absolute monarchical principle has been counteracted by crime, tortuitous in its policy, and selfish and exclusive in its views. Its dominion has absorbed not only the treasures of the human mind, but it has employed the religious, moral, and civil capacity of mankind to subdue and overcome the laws of nature ; but the time has now arrived, when the anomaly is about to be investigated, and a wholesome and permanent remedy supplied.

Modern history supplies us with few instances of a wise, temperate, and constitutional government, by an individual, where the sole power has been intrusted to him ; yet there have been wise and humane kings, who have merited and deserved the esteem of mankind. The evil is in the men who surround them, in the adulation of the air they breathe, and in the folly of the axiom that ‘ a King can do no wrong.’

George IV., according to the nature of our government, was called a constitutional monarch; that is, one who rules agreeably to law, without civil or legal responsibility. But who can be ignorant of the supple nature of a Court and courtiers? Who that has heard of their intrigues and felt the influence of them, can confide in a proper administration of justice? The policy of the Sovereign is necessarily that of his Ministers, and the most unworthy of them but dispense his bounties and execute his commands. If it chance that a King or a Prince selects his friends and companions from men of moderate capacity and unequal attainments, without rank or independence, both of which must either be *acquired* or *given*, to enable them to maintain their station, can the people otherwise than suffer? Who shared in the splendour of the Prince of Wales but the creatures of his will, or the instruments of his pleasure? and where or how were these instruments selected? From the lowest stages of society, as in the case of Sir John M'Mahon, Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, Sir Frederick Watson, Mr. Marrable, &c. the latter of which gentlemen stood prominently in the will of his patron, Sir John M'Mahon, as a legatee for 2000*l.*, but still more advantageously for himself as a specific legacy in his own person to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales*. It is well known that the individuals who surrounded his Royal Highness were persons of obscure origin and mediocre talent, for he was himself like the sun in centre of his own system; he appeared to be pleased with no other lights than what were reflected from himself.

If, however, the Prince had one meritorious servant about him, we believe Sir Frederick Watson to have been such, although the secret of his rise is as inexplicable as his origin was humble. His father was one of the doorkeepers to the Treasury, with a very large family to provide for. One son he succeeded in placing in the Post-office, to whom Sir Frederick in his earlier days was much indebted, and another in the Bank: but Frederick took more to books than men, and was what is vulgarly called the gentleman of the family. At last a fortu-

* It would be curious to inquire, as Mr. Marrable was a specific legacy to his Royal Highness, at what amount the worthy gentleman was rated under the Legacy duty. If his value were to be estimated according to the *nature* of his services, the most proper referees would be the Proctors of Doctors Commons!!

nate introduction as secretary to the old Marquess Townsend, formerly Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, threw him in the way of the present Duke of Cumberland, who, discovering a certain tact about him, begged him of the marquess, who very reluctantly parted with him to his Royal Highness. At the time of SELLIS' affair, he was the confidential servant of the Duke, and the mystery (*if it be a mystery*) which still hangs over that extraordinary transaction, shews that Sir Frederick Watson is one of those individuals who betray not the secrets of their masters, although it was, perhaps, the very possession of that particular secret, which made it necessary to retain Sir Frederick within the precincts of the court. For this reason perhaps the Duke, on his going abroad, was induced to recommend his faithful and confidential servant to the Prince of Wales, who took him immediately into his household, and he soon grew into the especial confidence and favour of his new master. After passing through several subordinate but confidential employments, he was appointed, in 1826, as one of the Commissioners of the Customs, but he was not allowed to remain long in that situation ; for, on the return of the Duke of Cumberland to England, after the death of Mr. Canning, for the avowed purpose of opposing the claims of the Catholics (the only solitary act of his life which can be enrolled in the annals of his country as deserving of its gratitude), Mr. Watson was removed from the Customs, and promoted to the superior situation of Comptroller of the Royal Household, and at the same time created a knight of the Guelphic Order.

Sir Frederick Watson is rather an accomplished and ingenious man than a well and regularly instructed one ; but he is said to possess all the qualities required to form a courtier* ;

* Of the truth of this part of his character we can speak from self-experience. The person who breathed the atmosphere of Carlton House, at the period when Sir Frederick was a resident within its walls, must have been every inch a courtier, or he had no business there. The only person, then one of the intimates of the Prince of Wales, who could not exactly assimilate himself to the smooth and silky ways of the courtier, was the late Sir Edmund Nagle. Sir Frederick would accost you with all the suavity and urbanity of the most finished gentleman—Sir Edmund would meet you with his usual ‘G—d d—n you ! and what do you want now ?’ The refusal of Sir Frederick to any favour that was asked, had something of such a flattering nature intermingled with it, that you left him with the strongest prepossession in his favour ; he appeared to take an interest in your suit—proffered his advice with the most apparent friendship—and would actually refer you to individuals whose greater influence might promote your views, but where, in the true

and is generally held by all persons at Court as the representative of the interests of his former royal master.

We heard much, at the accession of his present Majesty, of the purging and purifying of the Court, and especially of the interior of Windsor Castle, it being then considered as an Augean stable, in which a certain class of animals had domiciliated themselves, of the wildest and most dangerous propensities; and which had been allowed for a length of time to frisk it and prance it about, as if no control existed over their misdeeds. Some, it was ascertained, to the great joy of the country, and to every lover of virtue, had been removed, or had removed themselves, though not without loading themselves with immense wealth, extracted from a too liberal and generous people, groaning under an insufferable load of taxation, to support a proud and pensioned aristocracy. Still, however, no little surprise was excited, that any of the dependants of the former profligate Court should have been retained. Not that we allude in particular to Sir Frederick Watson, for he is too useful a man to be dispensed with, and, we may add, *he knows too much* for any branch of the royal family to make an enemy of him. The man who has served faithfully and respectably two branches of the royal family—who is privy to the actions of one of them, which will cling to him, even if the crown were on his head—may well consider himself worthy of the confidence of a third, and the present most illustrious branch of it. We deny not the claims of Sir Frederick to this especial mark of his Sovereign's favour; but we wish we could say that it had been *exclusively* bestowed. There is a great deal of the old leaven still at work; and so long as it is allowed to operate, so long the nation be kept in a state of fermentation.

During the illness of the late King, it was manifest to every one about his royal person, and to the public also, that an obnoxious agency existed somewhere, which intercepted the

spirit of the accomplished courtier, he knew that you would not succeed. We had once the honour of being referred by him to Lord Sidmouth, at that time Secretary of State for the Home Department, and we were received by his Lordship with the utmost urbanity. He undertook, on the subject of our application, to forward a petition to his Majesty; and the conversation afterwards turning on literary subjects, his Lordship expressed a desire to have two of the works of which we were the author. The books were sent, and we heard no more either of the petition or of his Lordship.

knowledge of the real cause of the existing indisposition of the King, by the equivocating bulletins published by his authority. In its proper place we shall point to the fountain-head of that secret agency; but, in the mean time, it will be sufficient to express the suspicions prevalent at the time, that Sir Frederick Watson was the correspondent of more than one public journal, which held out to the last an adverse testimony to that of the physicians and other persons best acquainted with the nature of the disease.

The mild and amiable character of Sir Frederick Watson, and the duties of his station, may be supposed not to affect the political condition of the country; but, as the faithful confidant of an artful and intriguing man—bound by a thousand services to insinuate his capacity, and to support his pretensions to a share in the military administration of the country—the Duke of Cumberland is a dangerous colleague for such a man; nevertheless, it is true that such men sometimes rule the fate of nations. We have only to refer to some of the intrigues which have lately shown themselves in the quarter above alluded to, to prove that they are carried on with the view of embarrassing the executive part of the national policy, by opposing what is liberal, and inculcating in the minds of the subjects certain notions of power which are at variance with the principles of a free government.

The party of the Prince, which had been for some time crest-fallen, and reduced to their last shifts in the raising of the necessary supplies for the pressing exigencies of the moment, beheld, on a sudden, their hopes reviving, by the rumours which were at this time afloat of the precarious state of the King's health, and the consequent return of the Prince of Wales to the provisional government of the country. By his own immediate party this rumour was not only circulated, with extreme assiduity, but the royal malady was aggravated into a disease of a peculiarly dangerous nature, the recovery from which was extremely problematical, if not bordering on impossibility. These insidious reports were productive of the desired effect; the capitalists no longer held back with the supplies required—the bonds of the Prince rose in value, and every advantage was taken by the agents of his Royal High-

ness of the too ready disposition which was shown to support, by immediate advances, the extravagance and profusion manifested in every department of the household of Carlton House. In the mean time various rumours were afloat as to the precise nature of the royal malady, and whilst some maintained that it was a recurrence of that mental aberration under which his Majesty had previously suffered, and, consequently, as not of that fatal nature as to affect his life; others, on the contrary, maintained that it had no relation whatever to his former malady, but that it arose from a rheumatism, contracted through excessive heat, arising from the exercise of hunting. The latter was ultimately found to be the case. The disorder was at first deemed slight, and hopes were entertained that it would be easily removed; but, after various intermissions, and after some varieties of health and disease, in which his Majesty was occasionally advised by his medical attendants not to admit any visitant, the disorder assumed a more alarming appearance, and four physicians and doctors, Sir Lucas Pepys, Reynolds, Millman, and Heberden, were in constant attendance; assisted by Doctors Turton and Symmonds, who attended occasionally.

The certainty of a coalition between the two great political parties had for a long time absorbed the whole of the public attention, but it was now diverted into a different channel by the alarming illness of the King, which, by its predominant interest, seemed for a while to damp, and even almost to extinguish, the ardour which the intended attack on ministers had created. This attack was made with the approbation and concurrence of the Prince of Wales, whose displeasure was deep and vehement, in consequence of the rejection of his application for an efficient command in the army; and from the publication of the letters it may be well inferred, that the parties hostile to government would draw from that event the most sanguine hopes of their ultimate accession to power.

The Prince's party now began to collect all their strength in parliament, to force from the reluctant minister an avowal of the exact state of the King's health, and his consequent inability to exercise the royal functions. On the latter point all their

hopes were based of seeing the Prince of Wales at the head of the government; and, as a natural consequence, their own restoration to the highest offices of the state. It was on the 27th of February, 1804, that the subject was first mentioned in both Houses of Parliament, and it took place on a bill for consolidating the several Acts relative to the Volunteers, on the proposition for a second reading of which, Sir Robert Lawley moved an adjournment. Ever since the 14th of the present month, he said, the House, in common with the public at large, had been in possession of the melancholy information, that his Majesty had been confined by a dangerous and doubtful illness. It was not his wish to enter with any degree of minuteness into this most delicate and distressing subject; but he could not help thinking, that after the interval which had taken place, and after the reports of the physicians, specially appointed to disclose to the public the state of his Majesty's health for the last two days, that parliament had a right to expect some explicit communication.

Mr. Addington was at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer, a man who, as long as he filled the chair of the Speaker of the House of Commons, merited the respect and esteem which were so liberally bestowed upon him; but who no sooner became the prime minister of the country, than his whole conduct, as a statesman, was marked by imbecility and vacillation. In his answer to Sir Robert Lawley, he declared himself happy in being able to state, that in the opinion of his Majesty's *confidential servants*, founded on the best information that could be obtained, such a communication as that required by the Honourable Baronet could not possibly answer any good purpose; and further, that any proceeding founded on such communications on the part of his Majesty's ministers, would, in their opinion, be inconsistent with the duty they owed to the King, to parliament, and to the country; highly indecent in itself, under the present circumstances of his Majesty's indisposition, and, therefore, utterly unwarrantable.

Mr. Fox, as the leader of the Prince's party, said, that while he denied any intention, in the course of his observations, to fail in that delicacy, which the subject in debate so

strongly suggested, he avowed that it did not accord with his opinion to attach so great a degree of delicacy to this discussion as some persons might wish to inculcate. The public, he contended, had a right to better information than could be derived from the daily reports published by official authority. The Right Honourable Gentleman had informed them, that certain individuals, styling themselves his Majesty's confidential servants, of whom the House constitutionally knew nothing, had felt it their duty to give no information on a subject deeply interesting, not to the Members of the House alone, but to every loyal man throughout the empire. They added, that any communication of this sort would be productive of no good consequence, but that to require any information at present would be equally improper and indecent. Now the constitution required, both in its letter and spirit, that the executive authority should keep up a due influence over the legislative power. It was the undoubted prerogative of the Sovereign to preserve a certain degree of control over the legislature, as it was of the legislature to watch over the proceedings of the executive part of the constitution. A dissolution of Parliament might be necessary even at five minutes notice; and how was this control to be exercised during a suspension of the royal functions, or how could ministers claim a right to decide what was the fit time to make a communication? A fortnight had already elapsed, during which the functions of royalty had been confessedly suspended. Another fortnight might elapse, and the House might remain as uninformed on the subject of the indisposition of the Sovereign as at the present moment. He required that Parliament should be apprised of the actual state of the King's health, and thus be enabled to form an opinion of the steps necessary to be adopted for the public interest.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that ministers had no wish to withhold any degree of information, which, consistently with their duty, could possibly be disclosed, but in the conduct which they had hitherto pursued, had flattered themselves they had consulted the wishes and feelings of a great majority of the House as well as the public, and if they now abstained from any communication, it was from a sincere con-

viction that it would be inexpedient, and that, instead of being subservient to any useful purpose, it might only furnish grounds for discussion at all times to be reprobated, but more especially to be avoided in the present circumstances of the empire. They were aware of the extent of their responsibility before they determined on their present mode of conduct. It surely would not be maintained that, on every occasion when, by temporary illness, the functions of the Sovereign were suspended, it would be either necessary or expedient to make a communication on the subject to Parliament. But this would be the amount of Mr. Fox's argument, if carried to its utmost extent. From the reports of the physicians, Mr. Addington inferred that the illness of his Majesty was not likely to be of long duration; and if an expression from which a contrary opinion could be drawn had been used in one of their daily reports, it had been put in more through a wish to relieve that impatience which pervaded all ranks of the community, than from any opinion that the disorder with which his Majesty was afflicted was of a lingering description. He assured the house that, if any extraordinary occasion should occur for the exercise of the royal functions, there existed no obstruction to their exercise. Mr. Addington decried the motion of adjournment, as being not at all calculated to promote the object of inquiry.

Mr. Pitt agreed in the last observation, and, not without many remarks on the perilous nature of the responsibility of ministers, at length declared that they being, up to the moment of the supposed inability of his Majesty to exercise his royal functions, intrusted with the management of public affairs, it was not possible they could be displaced, or absolved from the duties of their offices, until the fact was ascertained by Parliament. He would not take upon himself to say how long the communication might be delayed, or at what moment it ought to be made; but, whatever might be his opinion of the conduct of ministers upon other points, he could not believe they could push to a dangerous and criminal excess that awful responsibility which belonged to them.

From this period, the discussion rested, in a great measure, on words used in the debate; but the ministers, notwithstanding all the skill and ingenuity displayed by the Prince's party,

were not to be intrapped into a confession of the positive inability of his Majesty to exercise the royal functions, and which, could it have been extracted, would have had an extraordinary influence on a certain negotiation which was at this time pending with a German prince, for a loan of money to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and to which a temporary stoppage had been put by the great uncertainty which prevailed of the King's ultimate recovery. Had Mr. Fox, or any of the Prince's party, been able to extract from ministers the avowal that the royal functions were positively suspended, or that any imminent danger existed from the royal malady, the difference of the terms on which the loan would have been contracted would have amounted to nearly 15 per cent. It is supposed that the obstinacy of ministers, in giving the required information, arose from some intelligence that had reached them of the pecuniary transactions in which the Prince of Wales was at this period engaged; and that they did not wish, by any official information, either to promote or retard the negotiations. In the mean time, however, some very sinister reports were circulated, evidently with the view of affecting the money-market, and ministers were again called upon to give to the country an explicit statement of the King's health. Mr. Windham, in his place in the House, declared the country would not be satisfied with the vague and ambiguous information given by ministers, whose whole statement was contradictory, inasmuch as they declared that the King was competent to do some things, and incompetent to do others; consequently, those which were not done by the King must be done by some one, and that some one must be his Majesty's minister.

When the Chancellor of the Exchequer had answered this objection by a new explanation, Mr. Grenville censured that explanation, as still unsatisfactory, and insisted that the physicians ought to be examined at the bar.

On the 1st of March, the same subject was mentioned in the upper house by Lord King, who alluded also to the declaration made in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He required some explicit information from ministers, but desisted from making any motion.

Lord Hawkesbury and the Lord Chancellor stated that

there existed at present no necessary suspension whatever of his Majesty's royal functions or authorities, and that his Majesty was in a state of convalescence.

Lords Grenville and King, and the Earls of Carlisle, Fitzwilliam, and Carnarvon, professed themselves not satisfied with this explanation: their reasons were nearly those which had been given in the House of Commons, and Lord Grenville mentioned that he should renew the subject at an early day.

From the 2d to the 9th, several conversations took place in both houses, and particularly when the royal assent was given by commission to several bills; but to every succeeding inquiry, the answers of ministers were more and more explicit in asserting, from the authority of the medical attendants, and from the interviews of the Lord Chancellor, that the cause of public anxiety was rapidly diminishing. The reports of the physicians were equally favourable; and before the end of the month it was formally announced that their official attendance was closed, and his Majesty gave audience to his ministers, and transacted business as usual.

Although this succinct account of the proceedings in Parliament may be supposed more properly to belong to the reign of George III., yet, it has been given here as a clue to the conduct of the Prince's party, whose aim it was to represent the malady of his Majesty as attended with imminent danger; and so far did their intrigues extend, that a considerable bribe was given to two of the public journals, to circulate adverse intelligence, which was transmitted to the immediate quarter from which the loan was to be obtained, the consequence of which was, that being too eager to seize the bait, the money was advanced on far more advantageous terms than it would have been obtained if the malady of his Majesty had not been represented to be of a dangerous nature.

It was in the course of the year 1804, that the six rolls of Papyri presented to the Prince of Wales by the King of Naples were safely deposited in Carlton House. Connected with these valuable remains of antiquity, is the flattering trait which it presented of the character of the late King in the promotion of the Arts and Sciences, and diffusion of the

advantages of literature. In the year 1800, his Royal Highness directed the Rev. John Hayter, a gentleman eminently well qualified for the task, to go to Italy, and with a suitable provision, to exert himself on the spot, under the permission of the King of Naples, to unrol and transcribe the papyri. In a letter, addressed by that gentleman to his Royal Highness, he says, 'The number of manuscripts saved from Herculaneum and Pompeii is said to be about 500 ; but if I be rightly informed, by those whose official situation must give them a competent knowledge of the subject, your Royal Highness, by facilitating the development of these volumes, will probably be the means of further excavation, and of rescuing from their interment an infinite quantity of others. But the very period at which the manuscripts were buried, serves to point out to your Royal Highness that you may expect the recovery of either the whole, or at least a part of the best writers of antiquity hitherto deemed irrecoverable.

'Your Royal Highness, by having proposed to concur with his Sicilian Majesty in the quicker and more effectual development, transcription, and publication of these manuscripts, will reap the satisfaction of having made a most princely attempt in behalf of knowledge and literature, on an occasion when their interests might be affected most materially, and in a manner of which no annals have afforded, or can hereafter afford an example. Your very interposition will be your glory ; your want of success will only make the learned world feel with gratitude what you would have done.'

This interference of the Prince of Wales had the happy effect of reviving the drooping spirits of the Italian *literati*, and the immediate consequence was, that the business of unrolling and transcribing the manuscripts proceeded with the most promising success. In forty-six years, not more than eighteen rolls had been developed before the interposition of his Royal Highness, but under his encouragement ninety were recovered in two years. Several of these were published, in the first instance at Naples, and afterwards in this country, by Mr. Phillips, under the sanction of his Royal Highness.

One of the most difficult trials which Col. M'Mahon had to undergo in the procuring of some distinguished favourite for

the royal harem, was in the case of the celebrated Hillisberg, and this amour presents the extraordinary feature of his Royal Highness becoming himself the negotiator of another suitor for her favours, after he had satiated himself with the richness of the fruit, and thought the exterior shell no longer worthy of his keeping. If ever there was a woman dear to the imagination as a dancer, Louise Hillisberg seemed created to realize the Idylls of the ancient poets, when peopling the groves of Greece with the dances and music of nature. She was the beau ideal of the voluptuary, when in his fancy he is creating a form gifted with all that can inflame the heart of man, or which can bring the mortal into close resemblance with the angel.

Hillisberg was born in England, of French parents, and was early destined for the stage, an atmosphere teeming with the most baneful influences upon the existence of female virtue. It was, however, in Paris, under the elder Vestris, that she first manifested that dramatic excellence, that knows how to awaken the sympathies by a glance of the eye, or to subdue the tumult of the passions by a smile of innocence and love. In private the same graces acquired for her the respect of the higher rank of females, who were delighted to intrust their children to her; while the men of fashion, who sought to attract her notice, and contended for her love, mingled respect with admiration, and the virtue that appeared to surround her, kept the passions under control.

Hillisberg made her debut in this country at the moment of time when the rivalry of certain noblemen kept the world of fashion in a state of continual excitement. Whenever a youthful beauty presented herself, under circumstances in which it might be supposed that a conquest could be gained, a crowd of candidates immediately presented themselves, out-vying each other in their assiduities and pretensions to exclusive favours, and exhausting the utmost force of their inventions, in drawing the desired victim into the snares prepared for her.

The Opera was, at the debut of Hillisberg, at its zenith in this country; Banti, Viganoni, Morelli, and Bolla, for the serious and comic opera; the younger Vestris, Hillisberg,

Maillaird, Rosa, &c., for the ballet; and Noverre, as the master of the latter, rendered their amusements classical and perfect in their several attractions. Hillisberg, as a dancer, became, in fact, the rage; and the competition for her favours, which she knew how to repel without offending, added to her wealth and influence. Some of those men who were apt to regard the virtue of an opera-dancer as equally frangible as the ice of an April morning, and that it would dissolve away with the first warm gust of passion that was breathed upon it, regarded Hillisberg as a being completely *sui generis*. There was that about her which the eye of man looks for in woman, and yet apparently so cold, so frigid, and seemingly as impervious to the influence of love as an oyster. These shrewd observers, however, only saw the exterior; there was a secret flame glowing within, but

She never told her love;
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.

Hillisberg was a woman fit to be wooed and won by royalty; and the Prince of Wales no sooner saw her than the abilities of John M'Mahon were called into action to commence the negotiation. She was, however, one of those women who, although yielding to the weakness of their nature, pay great deference to the opinion of the world; and although the Prince acquired a decided ascendancy over her heart, yet she so veiled her partiality, as to conceal her connexion from the eyes of the public; and this secret amour was so well managed at Carlton House by M'Mahon, who was in the confidence of both parties, that Hillisberg stood in the estimation of the public as an exemplary pattern of female virtue. A stronger proof of the secrecy with which this amour was carried on and consummated, cannot be deduced than the circumstance that, at the very time when she was the secret nocturnal guest of Carlton House, the late Duke of York was making every exertion in his power to make an impression upon her apparently obdurate heart, little suspecting, at the time, that that same heart was vivified by an ardent attachment for his own brother.

Amongst the young men who shone at this period in the

hemisphere of fashion, was the first Lord Barrymore, whose introduction to Carlton House, where he became initiated in all the vices which were exhibited in that royal brothel, joined to a disposition of his own naturally profligate and extravagant, soon rendered him notorious in the annals of gallantry; and as one of the companions of the Prince of Wales, he became acquainted with some of the most distinguished beauties of the day. The bacchanalian orgies of Carlton House were, at this time, of a most extraordinary description, and might be said to resemble more the interior of a Turkish seraglio, than the abode of a British Prince, in which it might be supposed that some respect ought to have been paid to the customary forms of decency and morality. The young libertine, with the tide of passion flowing strong upon him, had scenes exhibited to him, which opened at once to him the mysteries of nature, and rendered him on a sudden an adept, ere almost he had become a scholar. The dances which were exhibited for the amusement of the companions of the Prince were performed by females, whose sole aim and study appeared to have been, like the dancing girls of the East, to perfect themselves in voluptuousness of attitude, and in a shameless exposure of their person, to the unrestrained gaze of the libidinous voluptuary. Lord Barrymore was, at the Opera-house, one of the satellites who were continually moving round *the* Hillisberg; but the extraordinary reserve which she maintained in her intercourse with the numerous suitors for her favours, especially when she was in the performance of her professional duties, drove many away from her presence in despair, whilst in others it only increased the force of their exertions to carry off so splendid a treasure. It was, however, at Carlton House, that Lord Barrymore saw Hillisberg in her real native beauty, free from the garnish and garniture of her profession, and it was at a time when the Prince began to be sated with her charms, and would willingly have relinquished her to another, if that other could be found on whom she could fix her affections. The assiduities of Lord Barrymore were noticed by the Prince, and he doubted not that he had now found the individual, who would rid him of an object who possessed no longer the charm of novelty for

him, and whose very connexion with him, on account of its secrecy, was rendered positively irksome to him. His Royal Highness commenced a negotiation, but he soon discovered, that in regard to any illicit connexion, Hillisberg would not enter into any terms, which might be considered as a compromise of her character, and thereby expel her at once from that station in life which she had hitherto maintained. The Prince of Wales was strenuous in his efforts to obtain a settlement for Hillisberg, and the extreme anxiety which he displayed to transfer her to the arms of another, by no means exalted his Royal Highness in her good opinion. Finding, however, that *secondary* measures would not avail, Lord Barrymore, at last, was induced to make a formal offer of marriage, which was accompanied with the proprietorship of the house then building in Piccadilly, and since the residence of the Marquess of Hertford, with all the family diamonds then unsold, and the whole of the personal property, which the extravagant habits of this scion of nobility had yet left for him to dispose of. These offers were, however, all rejected. Hillisberg could not give her hand where she could not bestow her affections, and the Prince of Wales finding that he could not emancipate himself from the chains that enthralled him, by throwing her into the arms of another, took the earliest opportunity of excluding her from his society, and leaving her, like many of the victims who had preceded her, to further her own interest in the world according to the ruling bias of her disposition.

There are three kinds of returns for injuries: abject submission, severe retaliation, and contemptuous disregard. The first is always the worst, and the last generally the best; yet, however different they may be in themselves, the dignity of the last is so much superior to common conceptions, that an individual is, perhaps, forced upon the second, merely to prove that she did not stoop to the first; Hillisberg, for the treatment she received, sought not for retaliation, although she had it in her power to raise a flame amongst the community of Carlton House, which might have extended to a *certain* quarter, where it was the least wished for that it should reach. Her subsequent conduct to the Prince was, however, strongly marked by a contemptuous disregard, which, whilst it humbled

the royal delinquent, invested Hillisberg with a dignity of character seldom to be met with in the individuals of her vocation, and particularly amongst the female part of it. One evening, shortly after her repudiation (if that strong term, as applied to Hillisberg, may be allowed us) the Prince of Wales was behind the scenes at the Opera-house, when, in the most familiar manner, and as if totally unconscious of any previous improper conduct on his part, he accosted Hillisberg as she was leaving the stage. She cast upon him a look of ineffable scorn, saying, 'You are the Prince of Wales, Sir,—then know, that I am Louise Hillisberg;' and without deigning to make any other acknowledgment, passed on.

Hillisberg may, in verity, have been called an amiable woman. She fell, it must be confessed, to the blandishments which royalty strewed around her; and it must be added, to as ardent an attachment as ever vivified a female heart; but the close of her life was miserable. She connected herself with an emigrant of the court of Marie Antoinette, who squandered her fortune—neglected her person—broke her heart, and furnished another link to that chain, which although wreathed with flowers, that wither and die in the fetid atmosphere of a royal brothel, drags the suffering victim at last to an untimely grave. This individual was Mr. Charles Beaumont, who acted, while in England, in the double capacity of agent of both governments, but who has long been exiled from France, as the murderer of the virtuous Manuel, and one of the greatest slaves to the Villele administration.

There was not, perhaps, any circumstance which contributed more to increase the unpopularity of the Prince of Wales than his being in an almost continual state of discord with his illustrious father. It is said that the good can only live with the good; and as George III. was known in his habits to be a strictly moral and virtuous man, the reflecting part of the community immediately came to the conclusion, that as the sovereign and his son could not live together on terms of amity and goodwill, the acting cause was, that the virtues of the father could not coalesce with the vices of the son. It must, however, be acknowledged, that this disparity in their moral dispositions had no share in the early dissensions of the royal

parties, for they were entirely of a political nature. From the very first entrance of the Prince of Wales into life, when he emerged from the trammels of parental authority, one of his first steps was to enlist himself under the banners of opposition to his father's government; and from that period up to that of which we are now writing, numerous instances can be adduced in which the son arrayed himself against the father, and by his uniform devotedness to the political principles of the great leader of opposition, clogged the wheels of the machinery of the executive government, and threw every possible obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of its designs. The licentious and immoral conduct of the heir-apparent went deep to sting the heart of the royal parent; and the hand of forgiveness was no sooner stretched out, on the promises of reformation, than some new act of profligacy, of a deeper dye, perhaps, than any of the preceding ones, came upon the royal ear, and closed every avenue to all personal communication.

The disastrous results of the marriage of the Prince of Wales, who imputed the entire blame of the ill-starred union to the obstinacy of his father, in forcing him into a relation of life which he knew he was unable to fill with propriety, or even common decorum, tended, in a very material degree, to widen the breach between the illustrious parties; to which may be added, the decided espousal on the part of the King of the cause of the Princess of Wales, and his decided refusal of permitting the Prince to educate his own daughter, on a mere fictitious plea of prerogative.

Thus matters stood between the Royal parties at the close of the year 1804, when by some means, never made public, a reconciliation took place, which promised, though falsely, to be productive of the most beneficial consequences. The interview took place at Kew Palace, the Queen and the Princesses being present. The meeting, after a long interval, was extremely affecting, marked by every emotion of kindness and conciliation on the one part, and of filial respect on the other. After an hour's conference, his Majesty, accompanied by the Duke of Cumberland, returned to Windsor, and the Prince of Wales with the Dukes of Kent and Sussex, to Carlton House,

where the Duke of Rutland, Earl Moira, Mr. Sheridan, and others were ready to receive him ; at the same time that an express was sent to Woburn, to fetch Mr. Fox, to have an audience of the Prince on this happy occasion.

The King, however, had still some misgivings, as appears from the following letter, addressed to the Princess of Wales, to whom his Majesty continued to shew the most decided marks of affection. The Princess was at this time living at Montague House, Blackheath, his Majesty having presented her, in the year 1800, with the Rangership of Greenwich Park.

‘ Windsor Castle, November 13, 1804.

‘ My dearest Daughter-in-Law and Niece.—Yesterday I and the rest of the family had an interview with the Prince of Wales at Kew. Care was taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation or explanation, consequently, the conversation was neither instructive nor entertaining ; but it leaves the Prince of Wales in a situation to shew whether his desire to return to his family is only verbal or real, which time alone can prove. I am not idle in my endeavours to make inquiries that may enable me to communicate some plan for the advantage of the dear child, for whom you and I, with so much reason, must interest ourselves, and its effecting my having the happiness of living more with you, is no small incentive to my forming some idea on the subject ; but you may depend upon their not being decided upon without your thorough and cordial concurrence ; for your authority, as a mother, it is my object to support.

‘ Believe me at all times,

‘ My dearest Daughter-in-Law and Niece,

‘ Your most affectionate

‘ Father-in-Law and Uncle,

‘ GEORGE R.’

The opinion which was held by the public of the actual principle on which this reconciliation took place, was variously expressed ; for while some persons maintained that it was wholly of a private tendency, others saw in it an approximation of the two great political parties, and the latter opinion was in a great degree confirmed by the following comments extracted from a ministerial paper of the day, avowedly under the influence of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville.

‘ The happy interview and reconciliation between his Ma-

jesty and the Prince of Wales, have been placed upon such a footing by the partizans of the opposition, that some comments and explanations seem to be indispensably necessary. We have observed an extraordinary anxiety in them to assure the public, that the event is totally unmixed with political consideration, and that it has not the slightest political tendency, is an assertion which we will not credit. Is there a man amongst us that has not seen the lengths to which political differences have been carried? They have divided the dearest relatives, and shaken the longest friendships. But when a reconciliation is effected between men who have long been divided, is it possible that it can be effected without mutually softening the violence, and allaying the heat of political animosity? To say, then, that the reconciliation between his Majesty and the Prince of Wales has no political tendency, appears to us an absurdity, unless, indeed, those who assert it mean to aver that the reconciliation is not sincere! But if it be sincere, as we believe it is, it is impossible but that it must have a political tendency. The very caution and preliminary steps taken by the opposition bespeak their fears and apprehensions. They wish to give the reconciliation the air and form of a negotiation; they seem to have tried to hedge the Prince round with clogs and conditions; they submit his feelings and affections to the cold, calculating process of diplomatic proceeding. Mr. Fox must come to town; Mr. Pitt must be consulted.—Why? The intrusion of Mr. Pitt into the transaction is easily accounted for: they wish to have it supposed that Mr. Pitt exercises such a despotic influence, as to render his consent necessary, even upon a subject relating to the domestic ties and affections of his Sovereign and the heir-apparent. It is true that they confess his behaviour to have been candid and manly, but they take care to add that “he disavowed all wish to suffer any ministerial interference whatever on the occasion.” What do they mean by this? Do they mean to insinuate to the courts of Europe that ministerial interference does or can extend to the preventing a reconciliation between the King of England and his son—that the King must ask Mr. Pitt’s consent to have an interview with his son—and that the son must enter into a negotiation with

Mr. Pitt before he can be allowed to pay his dutiful respects to his father? Such is the inference which they seem to intend should be drawn from the appeal made to Mr. Pitt. We dare say that gentleman will feel little inclined to thank them for a compliment purchased at such an expense. It is impossible, we should think, for the Prince not to see that the opposition make a parade of these preliminary steps, for the purpose of having it supposed that they have him in their toils and trammels. "You may be reconciled to your father, but you must not support his minister." This is the language they hold to him; but can he believe them when they tell him that "every loyal Englishman will rejoice to hear that, in the happy interview between his Majesty and the Prince, as well as in all the preliminary steps that led to it, there was not the slightest mixture either of policy or party?" Can it be a subject of joy to any loyal Englishman to hear that the King and the Prince entertained different political sentiments? Every loyal Englishman would have been glad to have been informed that there had been a mixture of politics in the interview; for it can never be any other than a subject of sorrow and regret to see the heir-apparent to the throne at variance, in political sentiments, with his illustrious father. Yet it must be allowed that it is the obvious interest of the opposition to endeavour to continue a difference in political opinion between his Majesty and the Prince, in order that they may shelter themselves under his Royal Highness' countenance. But we rejoice in believing the party will no longer be able to misrepresent his Royal Highness' opinions respecting them. They would otherwise continue to find a political motive and meaning for every word and action; for it is not long since the public saw the very conviviality of the Prince's hospitable board represented as political meetings, for the purpose of strengthening and consolidating a system of opposition to the confidential friends and advisers of his Royal Highness' father. Let his Royal Highness reflect, too, upon the consequences of its being supposed for a moment, by the rest of Europe, that he approves of Mr. Fox's prostrate principles with respect to France. What would be the opinion of Europe, could

they imagine, after Buonaparte's daring insults and libels upon his Royal Highness' father, that he could entertain for an instant the supposition that the designs and intentions of Buonaparte were purely pacific and innocently commercial? We repeat, therefore, our firm opinion, that the reconciliation must have a tendency of a political nature. We hail it as an auspicious omen for the Prince and for the country; for nothing, we seriously believe, could give the people greater satisfaction than to see his Royal Highness escape from the perilous support of such a party.'

It is one of the trite maxims of life, that some men are born great, and others have greatness thrust upon them; but how far the truth of that maxim may regulate the courtesy of a court, where *one* only can be called great, may furnish matter of distinction between the late John M'Mahon and his surviving secretary, Mr. Marable. Amongst those persons, however, whom royal favour raised to the rank of gentlemen, Mr. Marable is one whom it is difficult to denominate by any specific official term, or to fix on the station which he occupied in the royal household. As we before stated, he was rather a legacy to the late King than his own voluntary choice, and he was retained rather *for what he knew*, than for that with which he was entrusted.

His late Majesty possessed considerable tact as to persons, and it is well known that the chief employment to which M'Mahon devoted himself was to contribute to the gratification of his royal master's passions. The laborious part of the intrigues in which M'Mahon was engaged, on behalf of the most princely voluptuary, fell, however, chiefly to the lot of Mr. Marable, who, in the first instance, did not himself look out for the objects of gratification; but they having been found by M'Mahon, the *terrain* was immediately beaten by Mr. Marable, the necessary snares were laid for the capture of the game, and with two such staunch, well-broken, and thoroughbred hunters on its scent, the chances of an escape amounted almost to an impossibility.

About this period, a lady appeared at the British court, whose beauty was of that angel nature, that mortals were apt to fall down and worship her, as if some divinity had come

down upon the earth, in its condescending spirit, to be for a time the associate of the human race, and be the sharer of their griefs and joys. This lady was the wife of a Nottinghamshire gentleman; and she no sooner breathed the air of the British court, than she became one of the presiding deities in the temple of Fashion. Her routs were the gayest, the most brilliant of the season; and at each of them shone conspicuously his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales*. To effect the conquest of such a woman was now the *ultima thule* of the wishes of his Royal Highness, and M'Mahon was set to work to lay the foundation for the accomplishment of the act. It may appear contrary to the manners of the present day, but, at the period of which we are now writing, there were certain houses in the vicinity of town, the resort of the gay and profligate, and at which persons of the highest rank did not think themselves degraded in being seen; for, where all are engaged in the same pursuit, there is no door open for mutual crimination, nor for a public exposure of the delinquency. The favourite house of Colonel M'Mahon and Mr. Marable, where it was their custom to make their assignations with those ladies whose charms had made an impression on the susceptible heart of their royal master, was the Horse and Groom at Streatham, then kept by a man of the name of Higginbottom, who afterwards removed to the British Hotel, Jermyn-street. To this house the beautiful Mrs. M. was invited, for the avowed purpose of joining a hunting party, an amusement to which it was well known she was exceedingly partial. For some reason, however, which M'Mahon, if he had pleased, was well able to solve, the hunting expedition did not take place on the day of invitation; but Mrs. M—— found at the

* The following anecdote, which was related to us by the individual himself, will convey to the reader some idea of the personal charms of this angelic mortal. Mr. B—t was at this time the leading dentist and chiropedist of the fashionable world. He belonged to the Society of Friends, but, unlike the members of that decent and modest community, Friend B—t was known to prefer the rosy lips of a lovely girl to witnessing the moving of the spirit in the Sunday conventicle. His whole time was spent in the boudoirs of the female votaries of fashion, and one day he was called in to exercise his professional skill on the feet of Mrs. M——. Having finished the operation, he imprinted a passionate kiss on one of her feet. 'B—t,' exclaimed Mrs. M——, 'what do you mean by that?' 'Thou wert going to pay me in money, friend, wert thou not?' said the chiropedist. 'Certainly,' answered Mrs. M——; 'what is your demand?' 'I have taken my payment,' said B—t; 'and for the same will I attend upon thee at any time.'

house a select party, which was composed of the immediate companions of the Prince of Wales, and preparations appeared to be making for an entertainment of a *princely* character. The artful intriguer began to ply his despicable arts; the poison of adulation was instilled into the too credulous ear of the lovely woman; and the effect which her superlative beauty had made upon the heart of the *most amiable and accomplished* individual of the kingdom was painted in such rapturous colours, that vanity, the most powerful, and, at the same time, the most dangerous weakness of the female sex, arose with all its mastery in her breast, and the victory was half won ere the despoiler came to rob the shell of its pearl, never afterwards to regain its original brightness and splendour.

It was growing late, and the party were about to return to town, when a carriage and four, the horses covered with foam, drove up to the door of the inn, for the ostensible purpose of refreshing the jaded animals, and Colonel M'Mahon, who was then standing at the window with Mrs. M——, immediately recognized the carriage to belong to the Prince of Wales, and his Royal Highness alone in it.

There was apparently no disposition on the part of his Royal Highness to alight, for who could suspect for a moment, that there was any premeditation, any preconcerted plan in his arrival at the Horse and Groom, at the critical moment when a party, of whom he was not supposed to possess any previous knowledge that they were actually in the house, were on the eve of their departure for town. Nothing, on the first view of it, could be more natural nor more common than that his Royal Highness, on his way from Brighton, should stop to refresh his horses; and in regard to Mrs. M——, it must not be concealed that she felt a secret pleasure in being thus thrown *accidentally* into the immediate society of the *most amiable and accomplished* gentleman of the country, on whose heart her charms were said to have made so deep an impression. Not truer is the needle to the pole than woman to the love of conquest, but the great difficulty lies in maintaining that conquest after it is made, and perhaps with no individual was that difficulty greater than with the Prince of Wales. The heart of Mrs. M——, however, beat with some strange emotions when she beheld Colonel M'Mahon assisting his Royal Highness to

alight, and in a few minutes afterwards usher him into the room in which she was sitting. To follow the interview through all its minute details, would be to depicture a scene on the one hand of the most heartless protestations of an excessive, unbounded love, and on the other, of all the trembling fears, the hesitation, the almost suffocating emotions which sway the female breast, when virtue is struggling for the mastery against the impetuous tide of passion, which in force increases every moment, whilst fainter and fainter becomes the opposition, until the eventful hour arrives, and the splendid fabric which stood beauteous and bright in the morning ray, presents, ere midnight comes, an object of ruin and desolation.

Mrs. M——— returned to town in the carriage of his Royal Highness; but we will not follow them to the haunts of their guilty pleasures, sufficient will it be to expose the termination of this amour, which threatened to unsettle the reason of one of the parties, and if the heart of the other had not been so cauterized by a continual course of libertinism as to render it impervious to the finer feelings of our nature, a pang must have been inflicted upon it, which it would require the duration of his after-life to appease.

It was morning, and the Prince and his beautiful companion were sitting at breakfast, when the conversation happened to turn on certain events in the life of his Royal Highness, as explanatory of some acts in which he had been engaged, and of which perhaps he wished to exculpate himself, in the opinion of his then admired favourite. ‘I know,’ said the Prince, ‘that I suffered much at the time in the public estimation; my enemies, for I believe no man has had a greater number than myself, stigmatized me at the time as the actual murderer of the boy, but it was proved that although he had received a severe chastisement from my hands, yet that his immediate death was not the result of it. The provocation which I received was sufficient to arouse the irascibility of the most phlegmatic person, and I afterwards discovered that he was suborned by the Countess of Jersey, in one of her jealous fits, to trace my steps in order to detect a little *affaire de cœur*, in which I was engaged with a beautiful girl in the vicinity of Brighton. And having now mentioned that once beloved favourite to you, I

cannot refrain expressing to you, that there is something in your shape and figure, in the very form of your countenance, and in your very manners, that strongly reminds me of her.'

'Was she allied to nobility?' asked Mrs. M——.

'Of her immediate station in life,' answered the Prince, 'I knew but little; she represented herself, and was known in the fashionable circles, as the daughter of a respectable Yorkshire gentleman, of moderate fortune; but I frequently heard her speak of her two sisters, one of whom she depicted as far surpassing herself in personal attractions. What that sister must have been in beauty I cannot pretend to say; but I will so far confess, that I considered Louisa Howard as one of the most perfect beauties I had ever seen.'

'Louisa Howard!' exclaimed Mrs. M——, whilst an ashy paleness came over her countenance.

'And what of her?' asked the Prince, 'did you know her?'

'Gracious God!' exclaimed Mrs. M——, scarcely able to maintain herself, 'and have I then been sacrificing myself to the seducer of my own sister?'

'Louisa Howard your sister!' exclaimed the Prince—'it cannot be.'

'Oh! it is all too true,' exclaimed Mrs. M——; 'I had forgotten many things which now rush upon my memory, to show me my own guilt. When Louisa became a victim to your stratagems, I was then but just bursting into life. I heard the whispers of her dishonour, but never to this moment did I know the name of him who brought it upon her. For her I weep not—for she is happy. It is for myself I weep—I stand now a dishonoured, a guilty, wretched creature—shut out from future happiness—a loathing to myself—the merited scorn and hatred of a malignant world. Henceforth there is no desert too dark for me—no solitude too deep—I shudder when I think of it, that to my sister's seducer—to him who dragged her like a lamb to be immolated on the altar of his unhallowed passion—to him have I now sacrificed all that is dear, all that is valuable to woman.—From this moment we part to meet no more—seek out for another victim, and add another crime to your already overloaded soul.'

They did part to meet no more ; this beautiful woman disappeared on a sudden from the world of fashion, like one of those coruscations of heaven, bright and glorious for a moment, when on a sudden not a trace of it is to be seen—lost, annihilated for ever *.

Deeply must his Royal Highness have felt (that is, if a libertine has any feelings but what originate in his own gratification) when he perused the following lines, the composition of a highly gifted female ; there is a dagger in every line, and the heart from which they emanated must have suffered much, ere it could bring itself to such severity of reproof.

Awaken ! awaken ! 'tis more than the dead
That bids thy dark slumber unseal :
'Tis a heart that has wither'd, a soul that has bled,
A lip whence the dew of forgiveness has fled,
Bids thee hear what *thou never wilt feel*.

Awaken ! awaken, thy adamant trance
Shall avail nought in moment like this ;
Know'st thou not of a victim, whose perishing glance
Might well o'er thy profligate threshold advance,
To blast all its brightest of bliss.

Thy victims are wide ; have I witness'd thy worst ?
Lo ! all thou gavest is thine ;
The blood thou hast lent to be harrow'd and curst,
A torrent of vengeance upon thee shall burst,
Here I leave thee the tribute of mine.

No ! not for the pride and the power thou canst see
Shall that voice in its waking be hush'd ;
No ! not for the thousands who smile upon thee,
To hallow thy crimes, and who shudder at me
For unshrouding the hearts thou has crush'd.

* In the year 1805 we were in company with this angel votary of fashion, this matchless specimen of feminine beauty. The worm that gnaweth at the heart had despoiled the cheek of its roseate hue, and had robbed the eye of the greater portion of its brilliant fire ; but still the knee might have been bent before her as an object worthy of worship and adoration. It was visible by the melancholy which overshadowed her brow, that the knell of her terrestrial happiness had rung, and that ere long she would be called upon to join her kindred sisters in another world. She still appeared as the elegant remnant of a master-piece of creation, when nature found that in her formation she had come too near an inhabitant of heaven, and threw away the mould for ever. She has been long the tenant of a grave, but it will be long ere earth will see her like again.

Oh ! that reptiles like thine should have power to controul
The thorn of one life on its stem,
To poison and crush the best thoughts of the soul,
Then deafen and drive it with calumny's howl
For an echoing world to condemn.

Some characters are very like certain bodies in chemistry, they may, perhaps, be very good in themselves, yet they fly off and refuse the least conjunction with each other. Carlton House was the domicile of many of such characters, and with the exception of *one* pursuit, Mr. Marable is the very type of them. He is, it is true, not so ambitious as Sir Frederic Watson, although the faithful secretary has not been badly rewarded for his services : his station, in the household, has a considerable salary attached to it ; he is (or was) one of the Commissioners of the Hackney-Coach Office ; and his brother, until the Board of Customs for the three kingdoms became consolidated, held an appointment in Ireland, of about 1500*l.* per annum ; and the Secretary himself derived a still more considerable income from his offices about the late King, and particularly as a reward for his secret services.

It has been said that the King should be allowed the choice of his own servants, and that it is the height of presumption to dictate to him by whom he shall be served. We dissent, not to the general principle of the position, for certainly there is not any thing in his situation which precludes him from the common privilege of every one of his subjects. But we do abrogate from the King any right to squander away a considerable sum of money in rewarding persons of no public merit, selected from the purlieus of the court ; nor should he influence any appointments in the public departments, which generally supersede long standing merit, and which, in such cases, are generally filled by the nominee of the favourite courtesan for the time being. If the King has a surplus income to dispose of, who has so great a right to receive it back again as those who gave it * ? Why should the people

* We write this at a time when the King of England enjoys an annual income of 1,200,000*l.*!! and the expenditure of the country is fifty-eight millions!!! to pay which the people of it are taxed in the proportion of seventy pounds in every hundred gained by their industry.

be taxed to reward the procurer, to enrich the auxiliary, and to fill our public offices with the creatures of the royal pleasures ? and all in defiance of the dignity of virtue, the decency of public morals, and the injury of men, whose meed

Is won

By all the useful acts they have done ;
and whose honesty and probity should claim and enjoy the fruits of their experience and labour, if not elbowed out by vice and injustice, into obscurity and solitude, and, perhaps, reduced to indigence and want.

It was impossible, however strong was the interest which subsisted before Colonel M'Mahon's death, but that it should abate when Mr. Marable lost his benefactor, and more particularly so, as this influence arose out of an employment, which might be said to subside with the excitement which the intervention of such agent was necessary to gratify. The task of such a person, and the duty he had to perform, were any thing but meritorious. If a *novelty* were to be obliterated, Mr. Marable prepared the sacrifice, and embellished the ceremonies with 'all the pomp and circumstances' which could reconcile the victim to submit patiently to her destiny. Surrounded by fascinations, which no virtue but that of a Lucretia could withstand, the head grew giddy, and the heart drunk with vanity and ambition. On these occasions, the half-smothered sigh of the woman was heard to be gently consoled by the alluring descriptions of the eloquent Secretary ;—of the *honour* of her illustrious paramour—his rank—his power—his all-surpassing goodness. The whole of the lesson of love's catechism was told o'er and o'er again, until, like the struggling bird, struck with the look of the basilisk, all power of resistance is gone, and the victim falls into the ruthless grasp of its insatiable destroyer.

Mr. Marable is in all respects a gentlemanly man, in fact, his *employments* under the late King demanded that he should be the most finished gentleman ; he is also what is generally termed a *man of the world*. We are, however, well conversant with the manual which the individual who entered into any office at Carlton House had to learn, before he could be considered as entitled to the designation of a man of the world,

It ran as follows:—He must always wear a smooth exterior, and conceal his real sentiments behind a mask of impenetrable dissimulation. He must make the most extravagant professions of love and attachment, while hatred and malignity are rankling in his heart. He must bend the knee of submission to the arrogance of power, and feed with never-ceasing adulation the weak vanity of princes and of fools. He must resolutely dismiss every lingering attachment to virtue, as an incumbrance incompatible with the nature of his pursuits. He will find the *appearance* of justice, benevolence, mercy, and candour, occasionally useful, but he must take care not to clog himself with any of that antiquated rubbish *in reality*; it would prove an insuperable obstacle to his refined operations, particularly with females, and in the end prove the means of his destruction. He must *appear* to be an enemy to injustice, cruelty, and dissimulation; but he must remember to be possessed of these vices *in fact*; he will find them absolutely necessary in the furtherance of his plans. If he should receive favours, it will be judicious to make professions of the most unbounded gratitude, but he must observe that his gratitude be merely professional, for otherwise it might become greatly prejudicial to his personal interests. He may affect to be a warm and disinterested friend, but he must be at all times ready to sacrifice his friendship when it comes in competition with the success of his schemes. He must put confidence in no one, but live with his friend under the expectation of that friend becoming one day his enemy. He must on no occasion express the resentment he may feel, but meet his enemy with every appearance of respect, under the idea that the time may come when, his enemy's interest and his own being the same, they may act together as friends. He must practise every vice, and descend to every species of meanness that he may find useful in the progress of his operations, but these things must be transacted as much as possible in the shade. He must assume the garb of piety; beneath the snowy mantle of religion, he may erect a kennel for the hellhounds of vice, and a harbour for the monsters of iniquity. He must form a just estimate of the vices, weaknesses, and ruling passions of his associates, and make all these things instrumental to his

own advancement. We do not mean, however, to infer that Mr. Marable, as a man of the world, and once a resident of Carlton House, was perfect in all these qualifications ; but that a man could be a resident there, and not be a proficient in the majority of them, were tantamount to saying that he was not fit for the situation which he held. In regard to birth, Mr. Marable and Sir Francis Watson stand on nearly an equal grade ; but it should be remembered, that the former was only secretary to a secretary, or rather privy purse to his Royal Highness ; that Mr. Marable's patron is dead—and that Sir Frederick Watson survives ; that the one *is* in possession of secrets with which the other never was intrusted, and that the gratitude of George IV. to Mr. Marable was more *political* than *personal* ; nevertheless, if a correct estimate be formed of the services rendered by Mr. Marable—if the darkness of the future could be illuminated by a parting ray of the light gone by—we might then be able to form some idea of the extent of the claims which Mr. Marable possessed upon the royal bounty. Who that has witnessed the preliminary orgies at Streatham, the assemblies at Mrs. H——'s, in Charles-street, in the decline of her life, that notorious *mêlée* of tradesmen's wives and tonish demireps, where Colonel M'Mahon and *his friend* appeared the centre of a circle, but must acknowledge that Mr. Marable has not been rewarded to the extent of the services which he rendered ?

Mr. Marable is the son of a respectable family at Canterbury, and is indebted for his *entrée* into the service of Colonel M'Mahon to Mr. Edward Taylor, of Bifrons, near that city, the unfortunate but accomplished brother of Sir Herbert Taylor, whose estates in Kent the Marquess of Conyngham, it is said, has recently purchased of the family. By this gentleman he was recommended to his brother, and by his brother to the late Colonel M'Mahon, to whom he proved a faithful friend and exemplary servant. The death, however, of his patron stopped his promotion, and his marriage with an amiable and excellent woman adds respectability to his partial retirement from the service of royalty. In the winter of his life, may the shades of Mrs. B——n and her husband never cross him in his path, to recall to him the

memory of the past, and thereby embitter the enjoyment of the present.

Mrs. B—ing—n was the wife of the son of an old respectable merchant on the Hambro' Walk, who had brought up his son to be a credit to his business. Mrs. B. was a beautiful woman, not more than twenty-one years of age, and of a family equally respectable with that of her husband. At the time of her marriage, her husband was a member of a club at the west end of the town, and was consequently acquainted with several men of rank and fashion, to whom, after his marriage, he introduced his accomplished and beautiful wife. She became the reigning toast of the day; the Prince of Wales witnessed the enthusiasm with which her name was mentioned; and the result may be easily foreseen. The husband soon got intoxicated with the smiles of royalty. To bask in the sunbeams of a prince's favour—to be announced in the fashionable publications of the day as a member of the convivial parties of Carlton House—to be acknowledged by the Prince of Wales in the drives of Hyde Park, where one fool follows another, merely to try which can be the greater fool of the two—where is the head that would not grow giddy with such an accumulation of honour, with such a sudden transit from the soot of the city to the meridian splendour of a court? But he might say with the poet—

At once my high-blown pride
Broke under me, and all my pleasures left me,
Sullen, and sad, and angry, to the mercy
Of a long tongue that must for ever haunt me.

The ruin of Mrs. B——n was determined upon; and an easy access to the board of the infatuated, inflated husband was obtained for the usual class of the Prince's friends. The sequel is deeply tragical. Mrs. B——n died broken-hearted for the loss of her honour, and the husband languished in prison till his death.

To labour in fulness
Is sorer than to lie for need; and falsehood
Is worse in kings than beggars.

It is impossible to dwell upon the preceding narratives, and

conceive for one moment that the sensual powers of one man could survive amidst such a continued series of fresh excitements; or that such a man could of himself organize and sustain such a system of intrigue, so extensive, so ramified into every department of life; and at the same time find agents equally sensitive with himself, to act faithfully between, him and their own passions. Nor was it the case. We could point to many women who were *run down*—the peace of many families destroyed—the confidence between man and wife weakened, if not wholly destroyed—and all in the name of the Prince of Wales, merely for the gratification] of his favourites.

He bore the fault;
And there were men who, if a crime were done,
Would point with scorn, and cry, ‘He is the man
On whom the guilt must lie:’ but in his court
Were men as guilty as himself, who stood
Deep mersed in sin, the hatred of their race.

We shall, however, draw the veil over this part of our history; but our forbearance arises from no fear of the consequences which might result to ourselves from the vengeance of the individuals whom we have it in our power to expose; but the form of vice is, in some of its features, so hideous, that the interests of society are injured by the exposure of them. Yet, in a general view of the state of Carlton House, and *its dependencies*, at this time, how shall we be able to account for the great number of females of light character who were known to subsist on the Prince’s bounty, without any personal claims of a meretricious nature upon his generosity. It would fill a tolerably sized volume to enumerate those who were known to be maintained, and also those who, being ambitious of the honour, allowed themselves to be named as sharing in the royal favour. We are aware of a number of debts which were contracted by females of this stamp, under the commendatory plea that they were living under the protection of the Prince of Wales; but, although it would not be a difficult task to trace out an actual connexion between the parties, yet the greater number of these females, it is suspected, were employed, not on account of their own personal attractions, but for the sole purpose of pointing out, selecting, and over-

coming such females as should attract the regards of the Prince of Wales. We know, however, that it has happened in numberless cases, and for the honour of the sex be it recorded, that months have elapsed and have failed in producing the necessary alienation, before many women who had excited the passion of his Royal Highness could be brought to sacrifice their virtue, and surrender all the consolations arising from the good opinion of a world not always just in its decisions, but, in its moral rules and regulations, exercising a wholesome influence over the sensual and the profligate, which tends materially to check altogether the subversion of society.

It has been said of George IV. that his example was too secluded to operate dangerously on the manners of the people. As a monarch, the saying may have some truth in it; but as a prince, and as such we are now describing him, we will venture to say that the example which he set, as far as his influence could extend, went further to the demoralization of society than any prince recorded in the pages of history. Can the idea be for a moment entertained that such a man was surrounded by none but moralists; and that the intellectual wants of a court, from day to day, and from hour to hour, could be supplied by such men as those whose characters we have already decyphered; the same men whose chief pursuit was to provide for far less meritorious pleasures; and the only shrine at which they knelt was that of the reigning Lais of the palace. Is it possible that such an example as this should not be productive of the most baneful effects? Society is like the carved globe of the Chinese; it has its concentric circles, each possessing its specific individuality, and gradually diminishing to a centre point. We will suppose that point in society to be the point of royalty, and the very next circle to be that of the nobility; is it then possible that the circle of the nobility should not be influenced by the example of royalty? and, in a regular gradation, that the plebeian circle should not take its form and pressure from the example of the nobility? The putrid atmosphere in which a courtier lives and breathes, like the sirocco of the desert, pervades all ranks of society with its devastating influence, and from one gradation to another the *sentiment* of the courtier would circu-

late, the example be applauded, the charms that captivate would engross greater popularity, illicit pursuits would be invigorated, new desires created, and a species of immoral emulation excited between the sexes, as to who should attract the most, and the greater number of triumphs be reckoned over the coy and the reluctant, the giddy and the ambitious.

It could not, however, be expected that suitable objects would always be found within the immediate circles of the parties seeking these Cytherean laurels; and therefore every class was ransacked to recruit the brothels of the rich and the voluptuous. In England, in consequence of the dissoluteness of the immediate court of the Prince of Wales, society underwent an elementary change, which neither the virtuous character of George III. nor the exemplary conduct of his Queen could counteract or delay. The poison extended far and wide; the virus was deep seated and radical, and festered through every class of society. In fact, the manners of the court of the Prince of Wales, if it be deserving of the name of a court, had corrupted the body politic in all directions, which an affected piety, and an outward observance of the forms of religion, could neither qualify nor disguise. The affair with the Queen drew the veil that concealed these deformities still more aside; and the subsequent attachments of the Prince when he became the Monarch—the influence which these attachments acquired over him, both in his domestic habits and the internal policy of the state, daily accelerated that crisis, namely, a revolutionary movement of the people, which his death alone could have retarded and prevented.

As the parasitical panders of the Prince could not always succeed agreeably to his and their wishes, the following anecdote will go far to redeem the female character from much of that odium which several of our recent statements are calculated to cast upon it; and it is a splendid instance, which may rank with the deeds of the most eminent female characters recorded in history. A personal acquaintance with the parties enables us to vouch for the whole of the facts being minutely correct, although, from certain motives of delicacy, and from the high esteem which we entertain for the family, we will forbear publishing the names.

At this period, the house of Taylor, the shoemaker, in Bond-street (as appeared in evidence afterwards, in the affair of Mrs. Clarke and the Duke of York), was a noted rendezvous for fashionable intriguants. The master of the house, 'nothing loth,' would either aid or connive at the meetings appointed there; and he has been known to succeed, when every other channel has failed, to complete the delusions of his most fashionable customers. Amongst the latter was the beautiful Lady R——. She was the daughter of a country gentleman of good fortune, on whose education the utmost care had been bestowed, in order to confirm what nature had ingrafted on a heart of peculiar tenderness and sensibility. In her twentieth year she became the wife of Lord R——, thirty years older than herself, afflicted with an hereditary gout, but an accomplished and amiable man, formed to cement, perhaps, the friendship of a woman more than to awaken those kindlier sympathies with which youth, and pleasure, and flattery gladden the heart and imagination in the day-spring of a woman's life. Intelligent, grateful, and ardent, she grew attached from principle, and a mutual passion was reciprocated, based on an affection springing from the estimation of each other's virtues.

Young, beautiful, and interesting, Lady R—— soon became an object of fashionable admiration; and, although seldom seen abroad when her lord was confined by the periodical attacks of the gout, still circumstances carried her sometimes into society while he remained at home; and on one of these occasions, at Hertford House, she had the honour of being introduced to the Prince of Wales, and both of them seemed mutually gratified by the introduction. A short time after this interview, Lord R—— went to Bath, taking his lady with him, but who in a few weeks returned to town on some family affairs, which afforded the first opportunity for the Prince to commence his long meditated attack.

A military man, in the person of General Turner, was appointed to commence the siege; and, meeting with her Ladyship accidentally at an evening party, he took the opportunity of intimating to her the sensible impression which she had made on the heart of his royal master, insinuating, at the

same time, the unbounded respect which her Royal Highness entertained for her husband ; but at the same time he confessed that the difficulty was almost insuperable of rooting out those involuntary feelings, which insensibly combined the finest movements of the affections. Lady B—— was a woman, and therefore, perhaps, not insensible to the flattery so copiously showered upon her ; but the emotion was fugitive, and on the following day she intended to join her lord at Bath.

Prior to her Ladyship quitting town, she called at Taylor's, in Bond-street, to leave an order which it was her intention to carry back with her to Bath ; and the obsequious tradesman appointed the next day for her Ladyship to call for it. She was punctual to the appointment, when, by various arts in which the tradesman was a finished adept, her Ladyship was induced to walk up stairs, where, however, she was scarcely seated, before, from an adjoining room, the Prince of Wales threw himself at her feet, with protestations of the most ardent love. But the scene was too dramatic to succeed with a woman of honour and sensibility. The royal lover was repulsed with dignity and modest resolution ; and although the attempt was afterwards made by every concession that could reconcile her Ladyship to grant him a parting interview, yet the Prince could never succeed, and he retired, abashed and discomfited, to commence an attack in a different quarter. To the honour of the noble lord and his lady it must be stated, that up to the very hour of the King's death, neither of them could be persuaded to visit his court, nor kiss the hand of a man who had sought to destroy their peace and honour.—*O si sic omnia !*

From these scenes of private profligacy and deep moral degeneracy, we turn to others of a graver import, but which, in the extent of their criminality, stand the most conspicuous in the history of the illustrious subject of these memoirs. If any event were wanting to finish the body of the picture which the court of the Prince of Wales exhibited at this time, it was that one which now occurred, surpassing in extravagance and cruelty the crimes and perjuries of that of Henry VIII. ; we allude to the conduct adopted towards an unhappy and defenceless woman, the late Queen Caroline. We regret that

the nature of our work admits of little more than the sketch of an episode that must hereafter furnish the most grave and important chapter in the future history of this short but eventful reign.

It is impossible to look back upon the intrigues described, and the character of the actors who played their parts therein, and not form some decided opinion in regard to the number of the agents of all ranks who lent themselves to 'this most foul and damnable' conspiracy. Men and women of the highest rank, lawyers of eminence, and their hireling understrappers; even clergymen of honest repute, and the whole of the Prince's court, without exception, from Lord Moira (who, in this business, lost 'the fame of a thousand years') down to the door-keeper and the scullery-wench, combined to destroy one lone woman; whilst her husband, rioting in wantonness and voluptuousness, openly or sinisterly encouraged the attacks, which had for their end her death on a scaffold. Even the cradle in which her infancy was reared was ransacked for nursery tales; and ere the Princess Caroline could lisp the name of love, or reason and passion develop materials wherewith to adjudge her character, her infancy was slandered, and her puberty corrupted by the inventions of her enemies. By what course of tortuous policy was such a woman selected for the arms of the Prince of Wales? Who advised the connexion, or what must that man have been who consented to accept of it?

It is, however, now well known, that the whole of the tales concerning the young Princess were fabricated in this country by the companions of the Prince of Wales, and the creatures of his will. We could point to two individuals, now enjoying lucrative offices—one at the Cape of Good Hope, and the other at Botany Bay (who, if he had his deserts, should have been sent thither in a different capacity)—whose only services rendered to the country which is taxed to pay their salaries, consist in the exertions which they used to prove that the virgin character of Caroline of Brunswick was tainted ere nature had implanted in her breast a single idea of love or passion. In a court everything is predicated to gratify the wishes of its master: if he frowns, where is the courtly syco-

phant who dare be seen to smile? if from his Pandemonium he issues his mandate for the immolation of a victim—uprise the executors of his will—as erst the spirits of hell, rose from their sulphureous fires at the voice of Satan; and the deed is done, though infamy follow them through every path of their future life.

If we examine the condition of the court of Carlton House at the arrival of the Princess of Brunswick in this country, what a scene presents itself! We find Lady Jersey, the dominant *in-door* favourite, by whose intrigues Mrs. Fitzherbert had withdrawn, giving up to the former lady the suite of apartments which she had occupied, and from which apartments the Prince of Wales was seen retiring one morning by his own wife;—we find Mrs. Fitzherbert still the *out-door* favourite, with a number of minor satellites, accordingly as the *purveyors* succeeded in their search for novelties; we find John M'Mahon privy purse, grand caterer for the royal pleasures, the confidant of the Prince, and his most obsequious and pliant parasite*. The interminable link of courtezans and their paramours was struck from the grasp of the pander, and the Prince sighed over the fragments of the Circean cup, which this ill-fated marriage had dashed from his lips.

There is a sobriety in the union of the sexes, when virtue is the foundation, which is little calculated to please the taste of the voluptuary. The very stillness of the palace—the decorum of its domestic arrangements—the change of society, and those nameless graces of modesty which steal so imperceptibly upon the heart of man, could not survive in such a tainted atmosphere without being corrupted by it: all this was acknowledged and foreseen, but not provided against. The mistress of his illicit pleasures was introduced by the Prince to the confidence of the wife, nor was there a creature of the

* We have been informed, that the exposition of the birth, parentage, and education of John M'Mahon, given in a former part of this work, has excited towards us the severe wrath of the surviving branches of his family. The exposure may be to them 'bitter as wormwood;' but we tell them fearlessly, that we will not conceal the flagrant actions of their relative, as the pander of the Prince of Wales, to gain either their favour or approbation. It is the *vice* we reprobate, not the *individual*. But the family of John M'Mahon should be grateful to us—what we have hitherto stated is not a tithe of *what we know*; and, therefore, we consider ourselves entitled to their most special favour for our forbearance.

establishment changed, who had aided in its former excesses or shared in its pollutions. The embraces of the wife were less exciting than those of the courtesan; and the coldness of the husband paralysed that wild tumult of the affections which subsides into sentiments of purity and connubial love. Disgust on the one side, and indifference on the other, ended in a separation which endangered the state, and brought on the ruin of the woman, whom from the first it was designed to destroy.

Of the subordinate actors in this great national tragedy we know not how to speak with even common moderation. By their conduct the character of England and of Englishmen became impeached; it was pronounced as the synonyme of all that was base, treacherous, and vile; the native spoke it with shame, the foreigner with scorn; loyalty fell to a discount, and allegiance was regarded as a thing of mere question and expediency. If there were strong *appearances* of guilt in the conduct of the Princess, still *appearance* is not *fact*. It requires something more than mere semblance to establish positive crime; and until that crime be proved, by unimpeachable, incontrovertible evidence, the accused is fully entitled to all the privileges and consideration which innocence can lay claim to. If she did err, let her separation, her exposure, her enemies, and especially some of her friends, be considered; let her origin, her education, her prospects, her disappointments, her provocations, be taken into the account; let the characters of the emissaries employed against her be properly estimated, and the charges which they were *instructed* to prove; and if the head did not madden, and the heart break, with the accumulated injury, they must have been made of sterner stuff than it falls generally to the lot of mortals to be composed of.

There was a time when delicacy for the living, and a desire not to disturb the peace of the country, prompted us to be silent on certain deeds connected with this deepest of England's tragedies*; but as those reasons exist no more, we are

* In a work published by Fairman, and written by an individual in the service of the late Queen Caroline (but how she got there, Heaven best can tell), and which was intended as recriminatory on the part of her Majesty, we are made to

not bound by any further restriction. It may then be said of us—

————— This man's brow, like to a title-leaf,
Foretels the nature of a tragic volume.
So looks the strand whereon th' imperious flood
Hath left a witness'd usurpation.

Perhaps there is not anything which tends more to sap the moral principles of a family than the want of concert between the parents. This is felt more or less in all classes of society, though its effects are more fatal to the lower than the upper ranks of the people. The manners of the court of the Prince of Wales had already seduced a number of followers, gay and reckless as the Prince himself, to courses highly injurious to the conservative moral principles which unite society in a common obligation to protect each other. In this instance nothing could be more afflicting than the situation in which the heiress-presumptive to the throne was placed, in a national point of view, by the unnatural state which subsisted between the father and the mother, and which her own magnanimity could alone have repelled and mitigated; this magnanimity had, however, nearly proved fatal to her own character and principles. It may scarcely appear credible, but we vouch for the accuracy of the statement, although publicity has never yet been given to it, that insinuations were actually conveyed abroad to several of the German principalities in alliance with the House of Brunswick, that the legitimacy of the Princess Charlotte was doubtful; and thus in order to accomplish the ruin of the mother, the child was not spared on whose head the crown was to devolve in case of her father's decease, how greatly soever the throne was implicated in the fall.

One of the most memorable epochs in the life of the Prince of Wales, and, it may be added, in the history of modern

enjoy the honour of being a pensioner on the privy purse of the late King, of 100*l.* per annum, not as a reward for what we *did* say in a certain book, but for what we did *not* say; and in the same *authentic* work, we are made the participator in the delinquency, in conjunction with a servant of the royal family, of the name of Sims, of breaking open the desk of the late Princess Charlotte of Wales, for the purpose of extracting the celebrated letter written to her by her ill-fated mother—which letter, *by some means*, fell into the hands of the late Queen Charlotte, and was the chief cause of that deadly feud which ever after existed between them. More of this letter anon. In the mean time, the pension and the felony have a similar foundation in truth.

nations, is the conspiracy which was got up against the Princess of Wales, and which there is little doubt, but for the force of popular opinion, would have ended in her death on the scaffold. It began so early as 1801, when the Princess was living at Montague House, where she formed an acquaintance with Lady Charlotte Douglas, which was productive of the most extraordinary results. Volumes have been written concerning them; the interest and anxiety of the nation were roused to a state of excitation scarcely paralleled at any former period in its history; and in order to substantiate some of the alleged occurrences, which are asserted to have taken place at Montague House, such a tissue of falsehoods was asserted, and ultimately published, as has rarely, if ever, been heard of in any civilized community. These statements, and the transactions connected with them, have been usually designated as the Douglas Conspiracy.

Of Lady Charlotte Douglas, the chief contriver of and actress in this extraordinary drama, the following biographical particulars have been obtained. Her grandfather was an attorney at Gloucester, whose name was Charles Barrow, and who was created a baronet in consequence of his connexion with the corporation of that city. Sir Charles acquired a large fortune; he was, however, never married, but he left several daughters, one of whom, the mother of Lady Douglas, married a private soldier, named *Hephinson*, or *Hopkinson*, who was soon made a serjeant; and afterwards, by the interest of Sir Charles, he obtained the situation of army agent: he subsequently became a colonel, possessed of considerable wealth, and a fine estate near Gloucester. Mr. Douglas, whilst on the recruiting service at Gloucester, being then a lieutenant of marines, became acquainted with Miss Hopkinson and married her, but at what period is not precisely known. According to Lady Douglas' statement their courtship must have been a long one, as she says that she waited for Sir John nine years.

In the month of April, 1801, Sir John and Lady Douglas went to reside at Blackheath, because the air was better for Sir John, after his Egyptian services; and it was somewhat nearer Chatham, where his military duties occasionally called him. The person of Lady Douglas was handsome—she cer-

tainly appeared much younger than her husband; but the effects of his severe campaigns had produced in his countenance and in his general health an early senescence.

It may be here also necessary to introduce the name of Sir Sidney Smith, another prominent personage in this singular affair. When the Princess of Wales first became acquainted with him is not exactly known; but Lady Douglas stated, that she understood the Princess knew Sir Sidney before she became Princess of Wales. However, soon after Sir John and Lady Douglas went to reside on Blackheath, and also soon after Sir Sidney Smith's return to England from the Mediterranean, his visits to Sir John and Lady Douglas, from his previous intimacy with the former, became very frequent; in short, he became, as Lady Douglas said, a part of the family.

That jealousy, on the part of Lady Douglas, was one of the moving causes of her subsequent conduct, there can be, however, no reasonable doubt. It should not be forgotten, that Sir Sidney Smith has not, at any period, come publicly forward to repel any of the insinuations which have been made relative to his conduct at Montague House: his connexion with the Douglasses will, it is presumed, fully explain the cause of his silence.

The intimacy of Lady Douglas with the Princess of Wales continued from the month of November, 1801, till about Christmas, 1803; at which time the Douglasses left Blackheath, and went into Devonshire. In the month of October, 1804, they returned, when Lady Douglas left her card at Montague House, and on the 4th of the same month received a letter from Mrs. Vernon, desiring her not to come there any more. After receiving Mrs. Vernon's letter, Lady Douglas wrote to the Princess on the subject, but it was sent back unopened. Lady Douglas remarked, in her subsequent statement, 'I had never, at this time, mentioned the Princess' being with child, or being delivered of a child, to any person, not even to Sir John Douglas.'

This assertion, however, is untrue; for it was in consequence of some observations of Lady Douglas, reflecting on the character and conduct of her Royal Highness, and communicated to her, that the visits of Lady Douglas were ordered not to be

repeated at Montague House. Nor was this the sole reason for the conduct of the Princess ; but the levity and improper behaviour of Lady Douglas, which was a subject of general animadversion in the circle in which she moved, additionally determined the Princess on relinquishing her acquaintance altogether. But for this determination on the part of her Royal Highness, Lady Douglas would have continued her intimacy at Montague House.

The visits of Sir Sidney Smith to Montague House, at this time, were more frequent than was agreeable to Lady Douglas ; and whenever he was spending the evening there, her domestics observed that she was agitated and vexed. But Lady Douglas expressly stated, in her deposition, that she never observed any impropriety of conduct between Sir Sidney Smith and the Princess.

It unfortunately happened for the Princess of Wales, that she had, about this time, adopted a child of a poor woman of the name of Austin. Concerning the birth and parentage of this boy there fortunately has not been the least doubt, since first the matter was investigated. But Lady Douglas thought this a fit opportunity to assume and assert that this child was the offspring of the Princess of Wales ; and to convey to the then heir-apparent an account of the conduct of his wife (long since, it is true, living apart from him, and whom, in fact, though not in law, he had repudiated), which, as stated by Lady Douglas, was so wicked and so indecent, that, if true, demanded from the Prince of Wales and the country severe animadversion and reproof, not to say the ulterior proceeding of a regular and legal divorce, accompanied possibly with the higher and dreadful penalty which awaits the crime of high treason. But, if the alleged transactions had even been *true*, of all persons in the world Lady Douglas was the last who should have betrayed her friend and her benefactress ; a princess whose benevolence knew no bounds but the utmost limit of her means ; a princess who had heaped on the Douglasses innumerable favours and kindnesses ; who had fostered them in her bosom, without being aware that they would soon forget all her kindnesses, and become her secret accusers, and the projectors of her utter ruin. But these alleged transac-

tions have been indisputably proved to be false ; and, therefore, whatever epithets are bestowed upon Sir John and Lady Douglas must acquire from this consideration additional propriety and force.

Early in November, 1806, his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, influenced by the gross misrepresentations of Lady Douglas, acquainted the Prince of Wales that Sir John had communicated to him some circumstances relative to the conduct of his illustrious consort, which were of the utmost consequence to the honour of his Royal Highness, and to the security of the royal succession ; and that Sir John and his lady were ready, if called upon, to make a full disclosure. He added, that the Duke of Kent had been made partly acquainted with the affair a year before. In consequence of this communication, the Prince requested the Duke of Kent to inform him of the nature of those circumstances, and why he had, for a whole year, kept from his knowledge a matter so interesting to the honour of the royal family.

An interview took place, in consequence, between the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Kent, in the bed-chamber of the former ; and the conversation which took place between the illustrious brothers may be considered as the groundwork of the ulterior proceedings which were adopted, and which had such a decisive influence on the tranquillity of the country.

On being closeted with the Duke of Kent, the Prince immediately dismissed his attendants, and informed his royal brother that circumstances had come to his knowledge, with respect to a transaction with the Princess of Wales, in which he found that the Duke had been concerned ; and that, if he had not placed the most implicit reliance on the attachment of the Duke to himself, and, he added, to the Duke's well-known uprightness of character and principle, he should certainly have felt himself in no small degree offended, in having learnt the facts alluded to from *others*, and not in the first instance from *the Duke himself*, which he conceived himself in every way entitled to expect, and more especially from that footing of confidence on which the royal brothers had always stood with each other. Being, however, fully satisfied in his

own mind that the explanation would justify him in the opinion which he always entertained of his brother, and that he had been actuated by the most honourable motives in observing a silence towards himself on this, to him, most interesting subject, he requested the Duke to give him a distinct statement of the transaction, as far as he himself was concerned; and, offering his hand to the Duke at the same time, assured him that he did not feel the slightest displeasure towards him, but expected the most candid statement from him of every particular connected with the purport of his visit.

The Duke of Kent, in a written declaration, stated that, about the end of the year 1804, he had received a note from the Princess of Wales, stating she had got into an unpleasant altercation with Sir John and Lady Douglas, about an anonymous letter and a filthy drawing which they imputed to her, and about which they were making a noise. She requested the Duke of Kent to interfere, and prevent its going further.

His Royal Highness applied to Sir Sidney Smith, and, through him, had an interview with Sir John Douglas, who was greatly enraged, and who seemed convinced that both the anonymous letter and the loose drawing were by the hand of the Princess; and that the design was to provoke Sir John Douglas to a duel with his friend, Sir Sidney Smith, by the gross insinuations flung out respecting the latter and Lady Douglas. The Duke of Kent, however, succeeded in prevailing on Sir John Douglas to abstain from his purpose of commencing a prosecution, or of stirring further in the business, as he was satisfied in his mind of the falsehood of the insinuations, and could not be sure that the fabrications were not some gossiping story in which the Princess had no hand. Sir John, however, spoke with great indignation of the conduct of the Princess; and promised only that he would abstain from further investigation, but would not give a promise of preserving silence, should he be further annoyed. The Duke of Kent concluded with stating that nothing was communicated to him beyond this fracas; and that, having succeeded in stopping it, he did not think fit to trouble his Royal High-

ness with a gossiping story, that might be entirely founded on the misapprehension of the offended parties.

It is particularly worthy of notice, that Sir John Douglas, in the communication which he made to the Duke of Kent, did not refer to any conduct of the Princess, except relative to the anonymous letter and the drawing; although he and Lady Douglas subsequently deposed to her pregnancy and delivery, and other immoral transactions, which, in their depositions, they state to have been previously committed.

Shortly after this, Sir John and Lady Douglas made formal declarations, not only as to this anonymous letter, but also relating generally to the conduct of the Princess of Wales during their acquaintance with her. These declarations were made before the Duke of Sussex, and are dated Greenwich Park, December 3, 1805. They contained in substance the matter to which Lady Douglas subsequently deposed, and which will be noticed hereafter, but were combined with much more grossness and improbability.

These declarations were submitted by the Prince of Wales to the late Lord Thurlow, who said that his Royal Highness had no alternative—it was his duty to submit them to the King; as, if the allegations were true, the royal succession might be thereby affected. In the mean time it was resolved to make further inquiry; and a Mr. Lowten, Sir John Douglas' solicitor (whose selection was most extraordinary), was directed to take steps accordingly. The consequence was, that William and Sarah Lampert (servants to Sir John Douglas), William Cole, Robert and Sarah Bidgood, and Frances Lloyd, made declarations, the whole of which, together with those of Sir John and Lady Douglas, were submitted to his Majesty. Having perused them, and advised with Lord Thurlow, he issued his warrant, dated the 29th of May, 1806, directing Lord Erskine, Lord Grenville, Earl Spencer, and Lord Ellenborough, to inquire into the truth of the allegations, and to report to him thereon.

It appears, however, that although in this affair the Prince of Wales at first acted upon the advice given to him by Lord Thurlow, his lordship himself advised the Prince to consult Sir Samuel Romilly. The Prince's motives for so doing were

(as Sir Samuel many years afterwards stated, in his place in the House of Commons), because he, Sir Samuel, was unconnected with the Prince of Wales, and generally with politics. The information which the Prince had received relative to the conduct of the Princess of Wales was accordingly submitted to Sir Samuel Romilly for his advice; and after having considered it with the utmost care and anxiety, he addressed, in December, 1805, a letter to his Royal Highness, containing his sentiments on this important subject. After he gave that opinion, Sir Samuel said, that his Royal Highness took every possible means to ascertain what credit was due to the parties whose testimony had been given. In the change of administration which shortly followed after the death of Mr. Pitt, Sir Samuel Romilly was appointed Solicitor-General; and in March, 1806, he received his Majesty's commands to confer with Lord Thurlow on this matter: and in a short time afterwards the alleged charges were submitted to some of the King's ministers, and an authority was then issued to certain members of the Privy Council.

Sir Samuel Romilly also, at the same time, stated, that he was the only person present, besides the Commissioners, at all the examinations which were conducted by the four noble Lords mentioned, he taking down all the depositions. He thought that he was selected for this purpose in preference to the Attorney-General, merely because, if it should not be found necessary to institute any judicial or legislative proceedings upon it, it was desirable that the utmost secrecy should be observed. He declared, in the most solemn manner, that no inquiry was ever conducted with more impartiality, nor was there ever evinced a greater desire to discharge justly a great public duty. He subsequently stated, that he was present at all the examinations but one, which was the last, and that was of Mrs. Lisle.

The Commissioners in this investigation were prompt in proceeding according to his Majesty's commands. The Commission was dated the 29th of May, and on the 1st of June Lady Douglas and Sir John made their depositions. It has since been ascertained, that all the witnesses were examined separately, and enjoined to the strictest secrecy. Mrs.

Austin was sent for at ten o'clock at night from Pimlico to Downing-street, and conveyed there by one of Lord Grenville's servants; she never communicated the fact of her examination to any person, not even to the Princess of Wales, till the year 1813.

On the 14th of July the Commissioners made the following Report to his Majesty, which deserves and should receive particular consideration.

‘ May it please your Majesty,

‘ Your Majesty having been graciously pleased, by an instrument, under your Majesty's Royal Sign Manual, a copy of which is annexed to this report, to authorize, empower, and direct us to inquire into the truth of certain written declarations, touching the conduct of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, an abstract of which had been laid before your Majesty; and to examine upon oath such persons as we should see fit, touching and concerning the same, and to report to your Majesty the result of such examination. We have, in dutiful obedience to your Majesty's commands, proceeded to examine the several witnesses, the copies of whose depositions we have hereunto annexed; and in further execution of the said commands, we now most respectfully submit to your Majesty the report of these examinations, as it has appeared to us. But we beg leave, at the same time, humbly to refer your Majesty, for more complete information, to the examinations themselves, in order to correct any error of judgment into which we may have unintentionally fallen, with respect to any part of this business. On a reference to the above-mentioned declarations, as the necessary foundations of all our proceedings, we found that they consisted of certain statements, which had been laid before his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, respecting the conduct of her Royal Highness the Princess; that these statements not only imputed to her Royal Highness great impropriety and indecency of behaviour, but expressly asserted, partly on the ground of certain alleged declarations from the Princess's own mouth, and partly on the personal observations of the informants, the following most important facts, viz. That her Royal Highness had been pregnant in the year 1802, in consequence of an illicit intercourse; and that she had, in the same year, been secretly delivered of a male child, which child had, ever since that period, been brought up by her Royal Highness in her own house, and under her immediate inspection.

‘ These allegations, thus made, had, as we found, been followed by declarations from other persons, who had not indeed spoken to the important facts of the pregnancy or delivery of her Royal Highness, but had related other particulars, in themselves extremely suspicious, and still more so when connected with the assertions already mentioned. In the painful situation in which his Royal Highness was placed by these communications, we learnt that his Royal Highness had adopted the only course which could, in our judgment, with propriety be followed. When informations such as these had been thus confidently alleged, and particularly detailed, and had been in some degree supported by collateral evidence, applying to other points of the same nature, (though going to a far less extent,) one line could only be pursued. Every sentiment of duty to your Majesty, and of concern for the public welfare, required that these particulars should not be withheld from your Majesty, to whom, more particularly, belonged the cognizance of a matter of state so nearly touching the honour of your Majesty’s Royal Family, and by possibility affecting the succession of your Majesty’s Crown. Your Majesty had been pleased, on your part, to view the subject in the same light, considering it as a matter which, on every account, demanded the most immediate investigation. Your Majesty had thought fit to commit into our hands the duty of ascertaining, in the first instance, what degree of credit was due to the informations, and thereby enabling your Majesty to decide what further conduct to adopt concerning them. On this review, therefore, of the matters thus alleged, and of the course hitherto pursued upon them, we deemed it proper, in the first place, to examine those persons in whose declarations the occasion for this inquiry had originated, because if they, on being examined upon oath, had retracted, or varied from their assertions, all necessity of further investigation might possibly have been precluded. We accordingly first examined on oath the principal informants, Sir John Douglas, and Charlotte his wife, who both positively swore, the former to his having observed the fact of the pregnancy of her Royal Highness, and the latter to all the important particulars contained in her former declaration, and above referred to. Their examinations are annexed to this report, and are circumstantial and positive. The most material of those allegations, into the truth of which we have been directed to inquire, being thus far supported by the oath of the parties from whom they had proceeded, we then felt it to be our duty to follow up the inquiry by the examination of

such other persons as we judged best able to afford us information as to the facts in question. We thought it beyond all doubt that, in this course of inquiry, many particulars must be learnt, which would be necessarily conclusive on the truth or falsehood of these declarations—so many persons must have been witnesses to the appearance of an actually-existing pregnancy: also, many circumstances must have been attendant upon a real delivery, and difficulties, so numerous and insurmountable, must have been involved in any attempt to account for the infant in question, as the child of another woman, if it had been in fact the child of the Princess, that we entertained a full and confident expectation of arriving at complete proof, either in the affirmative or negative, on this part of the subject.

‘This expectation was not disappointed. We are happy to declare to your Majesty our perfect conviction that there is no foundation whatever for believing that the child now with the Princess is the child of her Royal Highness, or that she was delivered of any child in the year 1802; nor has anything appeared to us which would warrant the belief that she was pregnant in that year, or at any period within the compass of our inquiries.

‘The identity of the child now with the Princess, its parents, age, the place and the date of its birth, the time, and the circumstances of its being first taken under her Royal Highness’ protection, are all established by such a concurrence, both of positive and circumstantial evidence, as can, in our judgment, leave no question on this part of the subject. That child was, beyond all doubt, born in the Brownlow-street Hospital, on the 11th day of July, 1802, of the body of Sophia Austin; and was first brought to the Princess’ house in the month of November following. Neither should we be more warranted in expressing any doubt respecting the alleged pregnancy of the Princess, as stated in the original declarations—a fact so fully contradicted, and by so many witnesses, to whom, if true, it must in various ways be known, that we cannot think it entitled to the smallest credit. The testimonies on these two points are contained in the annexed depositions and letters. We have not partially abstracted them in this report, lest, by any unintentional omission, we might weaken their effect; but we humbly offer to your Majesty this, our clear and unanimous judgment upon them, formed upon full deliberation, and pronounced without hesitation, on the results of the whole inquiry. We do not, however, feel ourselves at liberty, much as we should wish it, to close our report

here. Besides the allegations of the pregnancy and delivery of the Princess, those declarations, on the whole of which your Majesty has been pleased to command us to inquire and report, contain, as we have already remarked, other particulars respecting her Royal Highness, such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavourable interpretations, from the various depositions and proofs annexed to this report; particularly from the examinations of Robert Bidgood, William Cole, Frances Lloyd, and Mrs. Lisle: your Majesty will perceive that several strong circumstances of this description have been positively sworn to by witnesses who cannot, in our judgment, be suspected of any unfavourable bias, and whose veracity in this respect we have seen no ground to question.

‘ On the precise bearing and effects of the facts thus appearing, it is not for us to decide; these we submit to your Majesty’s wisdom: but we conceive it to be our duty to report on this part of the inquiry as distinctly as on the former facts; that as, on the one hand, the facts of pregnancy and delivery are to our minds satisfactorily disproved, so, on the other hand, we think that the circumstances to which we now refer, particularly those stated to have passed between her Royal Highness and Captain Manby, must be credited until they shall receive some decisive contradiction; and, if true, are justly entitled to the most serious consideration. We cannot close this report without humbly assuring your Majesty that it was, on every account, our anxious wish to have executed this delicate trust with as little publicity as the nature of the case would possibly allow; and we intreat your Majesty’s permission to express our full persuasion that, if this wish has been disappointed, the failure is not imputable to anything unnecessarily said or done by us; all which is most humbly submitted to your Majesty.

(Signed) *John Wilson Croker* ‘ ERSKINE,

‘ SPENCER,

‘ GRENVILLE,

‘ ELLENBOROUGH.

‘ June 14, 1806.

‘ *A true copy*, I. BECKET.’

It is to be lamented that this solemn, though secret inquiry should appear to have originated in his Royal Highness the heir-apparent, because, as it was universally known, he had for a long time lived apart from the Princess; and, from

the letters which passed between them in 1806, MORALLY HE could have no right to institute any inquiry into the conduct of his wife. But it is said he had advisers, and two of these were Lord Thurlow and Sir Samuel Romilly. After giving due weight to both these gentlemen's opinions, it is evident that that advice must have been bad, which, when acted upon, tended to lower the heir-apparent to the throne in the eyes of the people, to whom it is always desirable that they should look with respect and esteem. Whether, on account of the *nation*, such an inquiry, on the *mere* statements of Sir John and Lady Douglas, ought to have been instituted, is another question; but the Prince should *not* have been made the most prominent party in it; indeed, he ought not to have appeared in it at all. It appears, however, that too ready credence was given to the statements of the Douglasses; for, although two of their servants, the Lamperts, were examined (of whose examinations nothing is known, and therefore no observations can be made upon them), yet, if *other* servants, who were living, or had lived with Sir John and Lady Douglas, at the period when they were intimate with the Princess of Wales, had been examined, a very different complexion would have been given to the whole affair, as the real character of Lady Douglas must, by these means, have been known. Whoever, therefore, advised and promoted this inquiry, under the impression that they were discharging 'a great public duty,' here, at any rate, evinced a great dereliction of it.

The commission itself was one of those anomalies in jurisprudence, of which it is to be hoped no repetition will ever occur. In the first place, it was SECRET; and the secrecy alone is its sufficient condemnation. The witnesses were examined separately, and enjoined to secrecy. One was taken from her home to be examined at ten o'clock at night. The accused was not present, either by herself or by her counsel; consequently, no proper cross-examination could take place. It must occur to every one that, if the Princess of Wales appeared to be guilty of the high treason which was laid to her charge by Lady Douglas (admitting, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, that her conduct ought to have been inquired into), it was the bounden duty of those

who had the welfare of the state in their hands to have instituted a solemn, and a *public* examination and trial of the accused lady. Nothing short of this ought to have been attempted. The very existence of a secret tribunal, and the mode of examining the witnesses, excite so much suspicion, and are so opposed to the genius of the English constitution, as well as to the great principles of justice, that no conclusion, made under such circumstances against the accused, ought to be for a moment entertained. The Princess complained most strongly, in her letter to the King, of such tribunals. They have, indeed, a taint in their nature, from which it is not possible, by any sophistry, that they ever can be freed.

In concluding these observations on the evidence adduced on this inquiry, the reader's attention should be directed to the circumstance that, although the motive for which the original inquiry, in consequence of the declarations of Lady Douglas, was begun, had been removed by the total disproof and utter annihilation of all her statements concerning the Princess, yet, that other charges were afterwards made by some other individuals, particularly relative to Sir Sidney Smith and Captain Manby, with which those of Lady Douglas had, apparently, nothing to do. That these charges have been satisfactorily disproved to the conviction of every unprejudiced mind, it is confidently assumed. For, although it is difficult to agree with the report of the commissioners, that 'what is stated to have passed between her Royal Highness and Captain Manby must be credited until it receive some decisive contradiction,' considering that the evidence on which that opinion was founded is by no means entitled to the credit which the four Lords thought proper to give it, yet, as the 'decisive contradiction' is supplied by Captain Manby's affidavit, this question is for ever set at rest.

As the Princess had been for many months, in consequence of this investigation, excluded from the royal family, and from any communication with his Majesty, who had always shown the greatest disposition of any branch of his illustrious House to do her justice, she naturally expected that, after the report of the commissioners, and the letter containing her defence, that the King would receive her as he had formerly been

accustomed to do. After, however, waiting nine weeks from the period of the transmission of her defence to his Majesty, she wrote him a letter, dated the 8th of December, 1806, complaining of not having heard from his Majesty, and most feelingly deplored the delay.

On the 28th of January, 1807, she received a note from his Majesty, informing her that the King, having referred to his confidential servants the proceedings and papers respecting her conduct, had been apprized by them, after the fullest consideration, that they agreed in the opinions contained in the report of the four Lords; and that it was their opinion that the facts of the case did not warrant their advising that any further steps should be taken by his Majesty's government upon it, except such only as his Majesty's law servants might think fit to recommend for the prosecution of Lady Douglas on those parts of her depositions which appeared justly liable thereto; that his Majesty was advised it was no longer necessary for him to decline receiving the Princess into his royal presence; that the King saw with satisfaction the decided proof of the falsehood of the accusation of pregnancy and delivery brought forward against her by Lady Douglas: but that there were other circumstances stated against her, which he regarded with serious concern; and he desired and expected that such conduct might in future be observed by the Princess as might fully justify those marks of paternal regard and affection which he always wished to shew to every part of the royal family. His Majesty added that he had directed that copies of the proceedings should be communicated to the Prince of Wales.

The next day the Princess wrote a note to his Majesty, requesting permission to wait upon him the Monday following at Windsor, or that he would name some other early day for that purpose. To this a reply was returned the same day from Windsor, informing her that his Majesty preferred receiving her in London, upon a day subsequent to the ensuing week, and of which he would apprise her.

On the 10th of February the Princess received a note from the King, purporting that, as the Princess of Wales might have been led to expect, from the King's letter to her, that he

would fix an early day for seeing her, his Majesty thought it right to acquaint her that the Prince of Wales, upon receiving the several documents concerning her conduct, made a formal communication to him of his intention to put them into the hands of his lawyers ; and praying that his Majesty would suspend any further steps in the business, until the Prince of Wales should be enabled to submit to him the statement which he proposed to make. The King, therefore, deferred naming a day, until the result of the Prince's intention should be known.

To this note the Princess, on the 12th, addressed a letter, beseeching his Majesty to recall his last determination, and informing him that she should, without delay, represent to him the various grounds upon which she felt the hardship of her case. She said, after suffering the punishment of banishment from his Majesty for seven months, pending an inquiry, affecting both her life and her honour ; after the termination of that inquiry, and the opinion of his sworn servants, that there was no longer any reason for his Majesty declining to receive her ; after his Majesty deciding to receive her at an early day ; after all this, she now found a renewed application on the part of the Prince of Wales, upon whose communication the first inquiry had been directed ; and that that punishment, which had been inflicted pending a seven months inquiry, was to be continued, and that she was to wait the result of some new proceeding suggested by the legal advisers of the Prince of Wales.

On the 16th of the same month, the Princess, according to her last communication, sent the King a long letter, explaining the various grounds on which she felt the hardship of her case.

On the 5th of March, her Royal Highness transmitted another letter to the King. She began by informing his Majesty, that she had hoped to have heard from him, and to have received his commands to pay her duty to him, in his royal presence. That hope being disappointed, she determined to wait a few days longer, before she took a step, which, when once taken, could not be recalled. Having, however, assured herself that his Majesty was in town, on the 4th, and not having received any command to wait upon him, she abandoned

all hope, and informed the King, that the publication of the proceedings alluded to would not be withheld beyond the Monday following.

Soon after this letter was sent, the ministry, of which Lord Grenville was the head, retired from office, and were succeeded by those who were confessedly the friends of the Princess. It was, therefore, natural to suppose, that the most complete justice would be done her. The new administration was formed of the very men who had so resolutely and so fully espoused and defended her cause, and who so openly and undisguisedly declared to his Majesty their full conviction of her innocence. The situation of her Royal Highness was, however, in the mean time, most irksome and harassing. She was well aware that the great obstacle to her reception at court rested with her mother-in-law, and not with his Majesty himself; and so long as the Grenville administration remained in office, which was known to be favourable to the views of the Queen, no hopes could be entertained of her restoration to her dignity and rank at court.

In less than a month after the new ministers came into office, the following Minute of Council was determined upon.

‘ MINUTE OF COUNCIL, APRIL 22, 1807.

Present,

Lord Chancellor, (ELDON).

Lord President, (CAMDEN).

Lord Privy Seal, (WESTMORELAND).

The Duke of PORTLAND.

The Earl of CHATHAM.

The Earl BATHURST.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH.

Lord MULGRAVE.

Mr. Secretary CANNING.

Lord HAWKESBURY.

‘ Your Majesty’s confidential servants have, in obedience to your Majesty’s commands, most attentively considered the original charges and report, the minutes of evidence, and all the other papers submitted to the consideration of your Majesty on the subject of those charges against her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

‘ In the stage in which this business is brought under their consideration, they do not feel themselves called upon to give any opinion as to the proceeding itself, or to the mode of investigation in which it has been thought proper to conduct it. But adverting to the advice which is stated by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to have directed his conduct, your Majesty’s confidential servants are anxious to impress upon your Majesty their conviction, that his Royal Highness could not, under such advice, consistently with his public duty, have done otherwise than lay before your Majesty the statements and examinations which were submitted to him on this subject.

‘ After the most deliberate consideration, however, of the evidence which has been brought before the Commissioners, and of the previous examinations, as well as of the answer and observations which have been submitted to your Majesty upon them, they feel it necessary to declare their decided concurrence in the clear and unanimous opinion of the Commissioners, confirmed by all your Majesty’s late confidential servants, that the two main charges alleged against her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, of pregnancy and delivery, are completely disproved ; and they further submit to your Majesty their unanimous opinion, that all other particulars of conduct brought in accusation against her Royal Highness, to which the character of criminality can be ascribed, *are satisfactorily contradicted, or rest upon evidence* of such a nature, and which was given under such circumstances, as render it, in the judgment of your Majesty’s confidential servants, undeserving of credit.

‘ Your Majesty’s confidential servants, therefore, concurring in that part of the opinion of your late servants, as stated in their minute of the 25th of January, that there is no longer any necessity for your Majesty being advised to decline receiving the Princess into your royal presence, humbly submit to your Majesty, that it is essentially necessary, in justice to her Royal Highness, and for the honour and interests of your Majesty’s illustrious family, that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales should be admitted with as little delay as possible into your Majesty’s royal presence, and that she should be received in a manner due to her rank and station in your Majesty’s court and family.

‘ Your Majesty’s confidential servants also beg leave to submit to your Majesty, that, considering that it may be necessary that your Majesty’s government should possess the means of referring to the state of this transaction, it is of the utmost importance that

these documents, demonstrating the grounds on which your Majesty proceeded, should be preserved in safe custody, and that for that purpose the originals, or authentic copies of these papers, should be sealed up and deposited in the office of your Majesty's principal Secretary of State.'

The ministers did not, however, stop here, but decided upon the following separate Minute, which appeared on the same day as the preceding.

'Your Majesty's confidential servants think it necessary to notice, in a separate Minute, the request of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, that for her more convenient attendance at your Majesty's court, some apartment should be allotted to her, in one of the royal palaces; although it appears to your Majesty's confidential servants, that some arrangement in this respect may be supposed naturally to arise out of the present state of this transaction, yet they humbly conceive that this is a subject so purely of a private and domestic nature that your Majesty would not expect from them any particular advice respecting it.'

In consequence of these minutes her Royal Highness was received at court, and apartments were assigned to her in Kensington Palace. She was not, however, on the same footing either at court, or in the royal family, as she had formerly been. It is remarkable that when she appeared at court on his Majesty's birth-day, the 4th June, 1807, as she passed through the presence-chamber and other rooms where the spectators were assembled, they received her with clapping of hands, and on her return from the drawing-room the same mark of respect was shewn her. Such an occurrence in such a place is very extraordinary and unusual, and evinced that sympathy in the sufferings and feelings of her Royal Highness, which the British public ever displayed towards her. Her triumph was now, therefore, complete; and having gained the object of her wishes, she seldom appeared at court, except on his Majesty's birth-day; she lived almost in a state of complete estrangement from the royal family; and dedicated her time to acts of benevolence, and the improvement of her own mind.

With these proceedings the matter, as far as the public was concerned, appeared to be set at rest; but the fiends of malig-

nity were set privately to work, and the Princess of Wales was surrounded by a set of pretended friends, but who were, in reality, spies placed upon her conduct by the Countess of Jersey, who became the depository of all the scandal that was collected, of all the misrepresentations that were invented, and of all the falsehoods that were fabricated. With her budget of infamy she hastened to the Prince of Wales, to whom she knew it would be a welcome offering: he gloated over the contents, and secretly triumphed that his victim was so fast hastening to her ruin. It is much to be regretted that the Prince did not understand the character of Lady Jersey, or that he was blind to her vices; or, otherwise, if he had diligently and impartially considered the representations which were made to him—had he analyzed them in the alembic of truth or probability, he would have seen their constituent principles to have been selfishness, malice, and revenge.

In regard to the members of the royal family, the house became divided against itself. The Queen and the Princesses espoused the cause of the Prince of Wales; the King, that of the Princess. The former abstained from her society, as if it exhaled some contaminating influence; the latter not only patronized her, but solemnly ratified his approval of her conduct, by frequently paying her a visit. The latter circumstance gave great offence to the Prince of Wales, and called forth his severest animadversions. The breach which had been lately closed up between the father and the son now threatened to be far more extensive than on any other previous occasion. When they met, their acknowledgments partook more of the character of the new and formal acquaintance, than of the affectionate intercourse between parent and child: on the countenance of the former sat the frown of a father's anger; on that of the latter was visible the disdainful look of a person labouring under a supposed injury.

By the public the tempest was supposed to have passed over, and the excitement which it had occasioned gradually subsided: but the muttering of the approaching storm, more terrible than its predecessor, was heard by some at a distance. The fiends who were to guide the destructive elements of it were seen prowling in their murky atmosphere, and emerging,

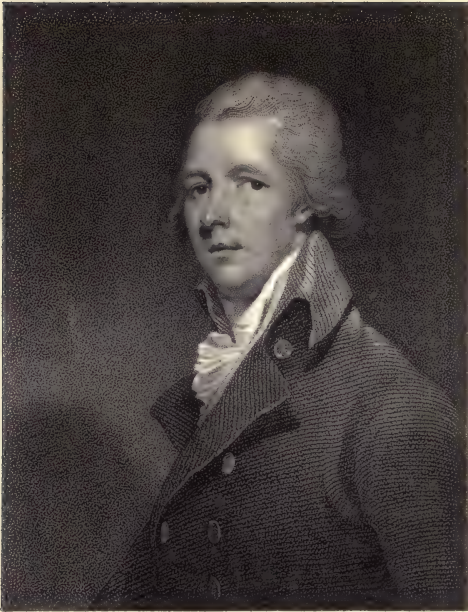
at the command of the ruler of the storm, from the dark caves of their guilt, to collect the poisonous materials to throw into the cauldron in which the intended victim was to be immolated. In the mean time, the Hecate of the royal harem wound her pestiferous spells round the heart of her infatuated slave—the venom worked marvellously—its livid spots became gradually visible on the body politic of the nation—the gangrene vitiated its dearest interests—and lust, iniquity, and guilt threatened to overcome the power of right, and justice, and humanity.

That the conduct of George III., in requiring the marriage of the Prince, was unwise, improper, and impolitic, cannot be disputed. He lived to deplore his determination, and sincerely did he regret it. Yet the excellence of his intentions are equally obvious, and their prudence must be acknowledged. This was, however, the cause of those disturbances which, for five and twenty years, at periods, agitated the English nation, and which threatened to involve the country in all the horrors of a civil war.

That the mere fact of a disagreement between the Prince and Princess of Wales has not and would not have occasioned such evils must indeed be admitted ; and that the wrongs she sustained, and the misery she endured, would alone have been insufficient motives to induce such feelings, must also be conceded. Connected with this fact, were the subsequent aggravating circumstances of conspiracy, of unpunished perjury, of rewarded falsehood, of the institution of illegal and unconstitutional inquiries into private character, of the establishment of petty Star Chambers, of the bribing of witnesses, of the persecution of an inquisition, of the introduction of novel laws and retrospective enactments, of secret committees, of open insult offered to a woman, and a queen ; of rights denied which the Constitution, the laws, and common sense acknowledged ; and, finally, of individual antipathies, requiring illegal relief, and of a ministry distinguished for duplicity and cunning, yet, for meanness, servility, and ignorance, proposing measures disapproved by the nation, and expending, unnecessarily and extravagantly, enormous sums of the public revenue. These were some of the aggravating circumstances ; and,

united, they at length created a mass of evil which the people would no longer endure, and of which they simultaneously expressed their disapprobation and abhorrence.

From this theme of national alarm, and national disgrace, we turn to a subject of melancholy reflection, namely, the deaths of two of the most celebrated statesmen who ever wielded the energies of a nation, which took place in the year 1806. With the names of Pitt and Fox is identified all that is great and grand in the human mind—all that is noble and sublime in intellectual power. Rare is the meteor in the heavens, and rare is genius on the earth. We stand transfixed with wonder, gazing at the splendour of the former—it vanishes, and we look around in vain for the object which shed its brightness on our path. Not so the genius on the earth;—he has sojourned amongst us in the plenitude of his intellectual brightness. He has, as if by the potency of some magic wand, opened to us the stores of nature, animate and inanimate. We have lived in a creation of his own, engendered in a moment of sublimity and terror, when on some Alpine height the lightnings flashed around him, or, borne on the wings of the tornado, he saw ‘his giant tail’ raising the mountain billow. Lovely, bright, and glorious, like an angel’s train, through floods of fire, we have revelled in his track: from star to star, from world to world, we have followed him in his flight; with him we have soared aloft, and asked the sun, ‘whence thy fires, and where the hand that sent thee forth?’ The warrior who has borne his banner in the field of victory—the philosopher who, by his discoveries, has increased the sum of human happiness—the poet who, in the excursive flights of his imagination, has embodied all that is great, and beautiful, and sublime in the human mind—the statesman who has successfully guided the helm of a mighty state at a period of danger and anarchy—has each, in his respective character, stamped a never-dying celebrity on his name. The ground is hallowed which contains his ashes; and, in the fulness of compatriot pride, we pronounce his name with triumph and exultation. It is not the tear of the afflicted relative only which falls on the grave of the philosopher or the statesman, but the tears of a nation are shed over his remains; and in

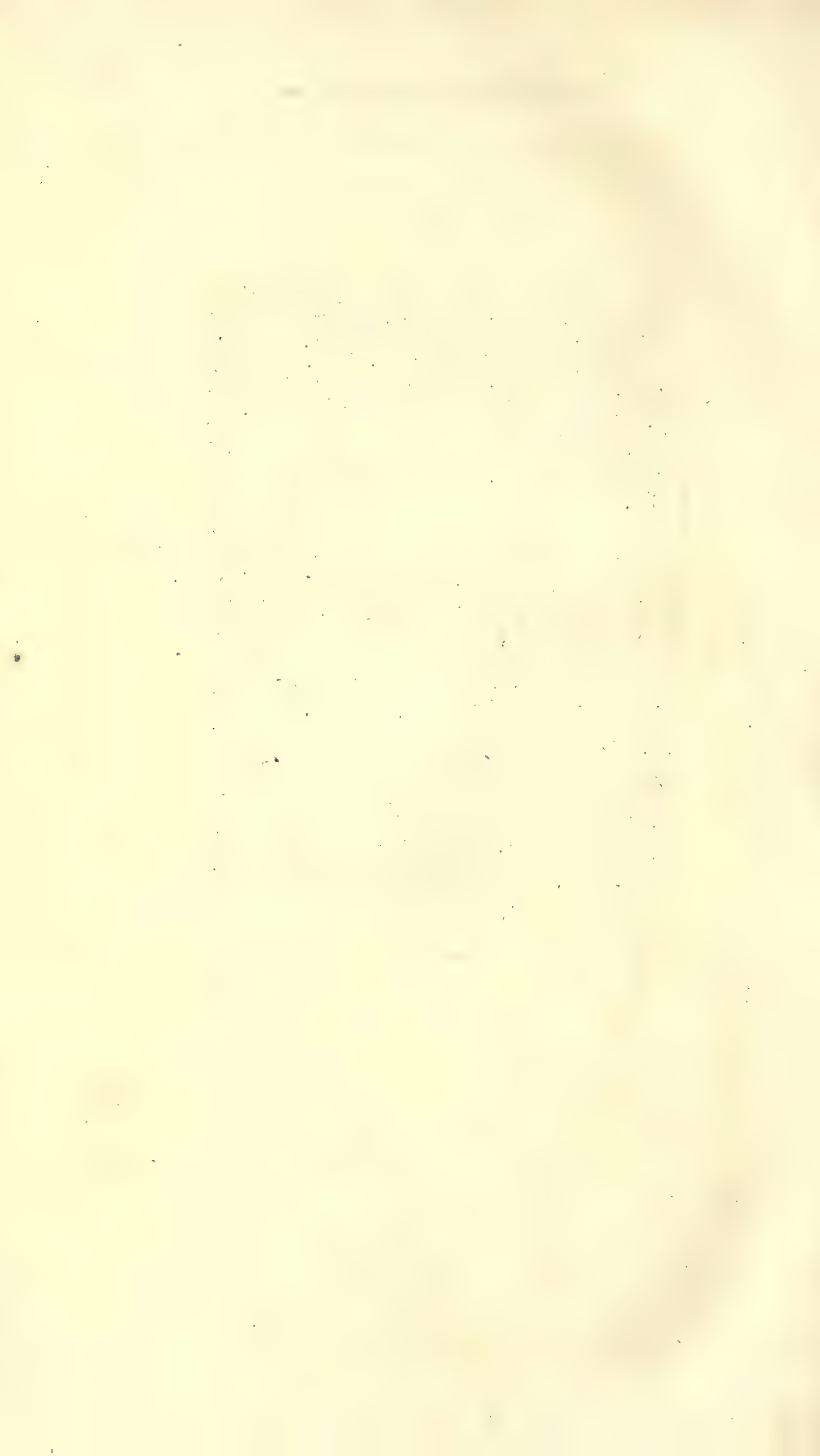


WILLIAM PITT.

W. P.

Painted by W. Owen. Engraved by W. H. H. H.

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whatever clime a congenial heart may beat, attuned to all the noble feelings which elevate and adorn our nature, there will the sigh of regret be heard, and the note of lamentation break upon the hour of its mirth.

The meteor of heaven vanishes—the mountains of the earth may crumble away—but the genius of man lives for ever, imperishable, inextinguishable, indestructible. Though the body, like the mountain, may lie mouldering into dust, the spirit still lives amongst us; it has left behind it that which can never die—which will never perish, until all life and breath are swept from the earth, and power is given to the angel of destruction to blot the world from being.

It is, however, a melancholy truth, verified by daily experience, that it is only after an individual, celebrated for his actions or his talents, has been enveloped in his shroud, and laid in the tomb of his fathers, that his virtues or his merits become properly appreciated. A host of enemies, conjured up by envy and malice, assail, whilst living, the fame and reputation of the man of genius, who, carried away by the power of his intellectual spirit, creates for himself an orbit of his own, and, scornful of the faint and feeble light emitted by the minor objects which surround him, dares, like an erratic star of heaven, loosed from an Almighty hold, to move in an eccentric course, and plunge into distant spheres, which the low and grovelling mind can never reach.

To attempt the delineation of the life and character of a minister of state is at all times a difficult, delicate, and sometimes a dangerous task; for the passions of the majority of men are too much agitated to attend to the coolness of discussion, while they contemplate the immediate political situation of their country; and it must also be considered that we should be deviating too far from the aim and intent of this work, were we to enter into an enlarged detail of the private or political history of the two illustrious statesmen whose death took place within a few months of each other; that of Mr. Pitt happening on the 23d of January, and that of Mr. Fox on the 13th of September, in the same year. Of the former it may be said that his character early passed its ordeal. Scarcely had he attained the age at which reflection com-

mences, when Europe with astonishment beheld him filling the first place in the councils of his country, and managing the vast mass of its concerns with all the vigour and steadiness of the most matured wisdom. Dignity, strength, discretion—these were among the masterly qualities of his mind at its first dawn. He had been nurtured a statesman, and his knowledge was of that kind which always lies ready for practical application. Not dealing in the subtleties of abstract politics, but moving in the slow, steady procession of reason, his conceptions were reflective, and his views correct. Habitually attentive to the concerns of government, he spared no pains to acquaint himself with whatever was connected, however minutely, with its prosperity. He was devoted to the state; its interests engrossed all his study, and engaged all his care: it was the element alone in which he seemed to live and move. He allowed himself but little recreation from his labours; his mind was always in its station, and his activity was unremitted.

He did not hastily adopt a measure, nor hastily abandon it. The plan struck out by him for the preservation of Europe was the result of prophetic wisdom and profound policy. But, although defeated in many respects by the selfish ambition and short-sighted imbecility of foreign powers, whose rulers were too venal or too weak to follow the flight of that mind which could have taught them to outwing the storm, the policy involved in it has still a secret operation on the conduct of surrounding states. His plans were full of energy, and the principles which inspired them looked beyond the consequences of the hour. In a period of change and convulsion, the most perilous in the history of Great Britain, when sedition stalked abroad, and when the emissaries of France, and the abettors of her regicide factions, formed a league, powerful from their number, and formidable by their talent, in that awful crisis the promptitude of his measures saved his country.

He knew nothing of that timid and wavering cast of mind which dares not abide by its own decision. He never suffered popular prejudice nor party clamour to turn him aside from any measure which his deliberate judgment had adopted: he

had a proud reliance on himself, and he was justified. Like the sturdy warrior leaning on his own battle-axe, conscious where his strength lay, he did not readily look beyond it.

As a debater in the House of Commons, his speeches were logical and argumentative. If they did not often abound with the graces of metaphor, or sparkle with the brilliancy of wit, they were always animated, elegant, and classical. The strength of his oratory was intrinsic; it presented the rich and abundant resource of a clear discernment and correct taste. His speeches are stamped with inimitable marks of originality. When replying to his opponents, his readiness was not more conspicuous than his energy: he was always prompt, and always dignified. He could sometimes have recourse to the sportiveness of irony, but he did not often seek any other aid than was to be derived from an arranged and extensive knowledge of his subject. This qualified him fully to discuss the arguments of others, and forcibly to defend his own. Thus armed, it was rarely in the power of his adversaries, mighty as they were, to beat him from the field. His eloquence, occasionally rapid, electric, vehement, was always chaste, winning, and persuasive; not awing into acquiescence, but arguing into conviction. His understanding was bold and comprehensive; nothing seemed too remote for its reach, or too large for its grasp. Unallured by dissipation, and unswayed by pleasure, he never sacrificed the national treasure to the one, nor the national interest to the other. To his unswerving integrity, the most authentic of all testimony is to be found in that unbounded public confidence which followed him throughout the whole of his political career. Of this part of his character a finer eulogium could not be passed than that which was pronounced by his great political opponent, Mr. Fox, in the House of Commons, on the motion respecting the erection of a monument to his memory, which came on to be debated on the 27th of July, 1806. 'But,' said Mr. Fox, 'when I see a minister who has been in office above twenty years, with the full command of places and public money, without any peculiar extravagance and waste, except what might be expected from the carelessness that, perhaps, necessarily arose from the

multiplicity of duties to which the attention of a man, in such a situation, must be directed; when I see a minister under such circumstances using his influence, neither to enrich himself, nor those with whom he is by family ties more peculiarly concerned—it is impossible for me not to conclude that this man is disinterested.’

To the disgrace of Mr. Fox, however, be it recorded, that he voted against the erection of a monument to a man, who, whatever might have been his political transgressions in the opinion of Mr. Fox, yet whose name will stand imperishable in the annals of his country as one of the most illustrious of its statesmen. The opposition which was shown to this measure by the party of Mr. Fox, was considered by the majority of the English people as captious and pitiful—but it must be remembered, that the memory of his great name depends not on the records of a British House of Commons, for long after they shall have been annihilated, when the constitution itself shall no longer exist, nay, when the venerable pile which contains his sacred ashes shall be crumbled into dust, the immortal name of Pitt will be found in the history of the world, when his great character will receive that justice which is due to his transcendent virtues and abilities.

The death of Mr. Pitt brought Mr. Fox again into office, but his accession to power, whatever hopes it might have excited in political party, or in the great body of the nation, was a circumstance pregnant to himself with inconvenience and danger. In a life of retirement, which, comparatively speaking at least, he might be said to enjoy, before his summons to power by the death of his political rival, the consequences of his youthful eccentricities were capable of being palliated by cautious attention and remedial applications. But on his advance to office, the perplexities of intrigue, the collision of claims, the chagrin of submitting to arrangements which he most desired to preclude, but which it seemed requisite to adopt, the prolonged contests in parliament, the frequent summonses to council, and even the very convivialities with which it was thought expedient to celebrate and cement a new administration, were but ill calculated for the preservation of that health, which was now more than ever desirable;

but also seemed more than ever in danger. In a few months symptoms appeared of an alarming nature, and it was strongly apprehended that Mr. Fox laboured under an incipient dropsy. The business of the House of Commons he was consequently obliged to abandon : but with this deduction from his harassing employments the remainder pressed too heavily upon him ; and whatever chance might have been afforded by a total abstinence from public business, and a recurrence to his rural retirement and regularity, this chance was not afforded. It was not long before the most decided indications of dropsy appeared, in consequence of which, all hope of continued life was founded upon a long succession of operations, which, in comparatively vigorous subjects, have sometimes preserved the springs of life for a series of years, but which a broken constitution has seldom, if ever, been capable of sustaining. The operation of tapping was several times performed on Mr. Fox, producing that temporary relief which it seldom fails to effect ; but the disease was too formidable for effectual resistance, and, in a short time, even for mitigation. After a series of increasing languors, amidst which the fondness of affection would seem to perceive foundations for hope which medical skill could never really admit, this great man, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, closed his connexion with all mortal scenes.

In the preceding pages of this work we have frequently touched, in a cursory manner, on the character of Mr. Fox, and it may be adduced against us, that in several instances we have depicted him, especially in his youth, as addicted to some of the very worst vices of our nature. It would have been exposing ourselves to the charge of gross impartiality, or of ignorance of the respective characters in their social relations, which have presented themselves to our notice in our progress through this work, if we had, from a mere spirit of forbearance, mollified our statements, or in some instances actually falsified them from a motive of prejudice or of party feeling. The private conduct of a man belongs to society in general—his political conduct is the sole property of history, and we are aware that the two characters are so opposite in their principles and qualifications, that the limner in sketching the former may represent it as true to life, deformed and

disfigured by the grossest imperfections, and yet in turning to the latter, he may delineate it with the brightest and most splendid colours which his pallet can produce. The contemporaries of Mr. Fox have, however, in many instances, so confounded his private and political character, and have so intermixed the shades of each, that the excellence of the one frequently overpowers the viciousness of the other, and the utmost vigour of mind is required so to analyse the whole, as to give to each portion its genuine and distinctive properties. We will, however, now regard him estranged from the gambling table, and the haunts of his youthful dissipation, and view him as the man, when the impetuous ebullitions of youth have subsided into the gravity and steadiness of age, and he stood in the legislative assembly of his country, as its brightest, greatest ornament.

Mr. Fox was a compound of extremes—at one moment a giant in intellect—at the next a child in simplicity and frivolity. He united in a most remarkable degree, says a noted historian, the seemingly repugnant characters of the mildest of men, and the most vehement of orators. In private life he was gentle, modest, placable, kind, of simple manners, and so averse from dogmatism, as to be not only unostentatious, but even sometimes inactive in conversation. His superiority was never felt but in the instruction which he imposed, or in the attention which his generous preference usually directed to the more obscure members of the company. The simplicity of his manners was far from excluding that perfect urbanity and amenity which flowed still more from the boldness of his nature than from familiar intercourse with the most polished society of Europe. The pleasantry, perhaps, of no man of wit had so unlaboured an appearance. It seemed rather to escape from his mind than to be produced by it. He had lived on the most intimate terms with all his contemporaries, distinguished for politeness, or philosophy, or learning, or the talents of public life. In the course of thirty years he had known almost every man in Europe, whose intercourse could strengthen, or enrich, or polish the mind. His own literature was varied and elegant. In classical erudition, which, by the custom of England, is more particularly called learning, he

was inferior to few professed scholars. Like all men of genius, he delighted to take refuge in poetry from the vulgarity and irritation of business. His own verses were easy and pleasant, and might have claimed no low place among those, which the French call *vers de société*. The poetical character of his mind was displayed by his extraordinary partiality for the poetry of the two most poetical nations, or at least languages of the west—those of the Greeks and of the Italians. He disliked political conversation, and never willingly took any part in it. To speak of him justly as an orator would carry us far beyond our prescribed limits. Everywhere natural, he carried into public something of that simple and negligent exterior which belonged to him in private. When he began to speak, a common observer might have thought him awkward; and even a consummate judge could only have been struck with the exquisite justness of his ideas, and the transparent simplicity of his manners. But no sooner had he spoken for some time, than he was changed into another being; he forgot himself and everything around him; he thought only of his subject; his genius warmed and kindled as he went on. He darted fire into his audience; torrents of impetuous and irresistible eloquence swept along their feelings and conviction. He certainly possessed, above all moderns, that union of reason, simplicity, and vehemence, which formed the prince of orators. He was the most Demosthenean speaker since the days of Demosthenes. ‘I knew him,’ says Mr. Burke, in a pamphlet written after their unhappy difference, ‘when he was nineteen, since which time he has risen, by slow degrees, to be the most brilliant and accomplished debater that the world ever saw.’ The quiet dignity of a mind roused only to great objects, and the absence of petty bustle, the contempt of show, the abhorrence of intrigue, the plainness and downrightness, and even the thorough good-nature which distinguished Mr. Fox, seem to render him no unfit representative of the old English character, which, if it ever changed, we should be sanguine indeed to see it succeeded by a better. The simplicity of his character inspired confidence, the ardour of his eloquence roused enthusiasm, and the gentleness of his manner invited friendship. ‘I admired,’ says Mr.

Gibbon, 'the powers of a superior man, as they are blended in his attractive character with all the softness and simplicity of a child; no human being was ever more free from any taint of malignity, vanity, or falsehood.'

From these qualities of his public and private character, it probably arose that no English statesman ever preserved, during so long a period of adverse fortune, so many affectionate friends and so many zealous adherents. The union of ardour in public sentiment, with mildness in social manners, was in Mr. Fox an hereditary quality. The same fascinating powers over the attachment of all who came within his sphere, is said to have belonged to his father; and those who are acquainted with the survivors of another generation, will feel this delightful quality is not extinct in the race.

These few hasty and honest sentiments are sketched in a temper too sober and serious for intentional exaggeration, and with too pious an affection for the memory of Mr. Fox, to profane it with any intermixture with the factious brawls and wrangles of the day. As a politician, he belongs exclusively to history; the measures which he supported or opposed may divide the opinion of posterity, as they have divided those of the present age. But he will most certainly command the unanimous reverence of future generations by his pure sentiments towards the commonwealth; by his zeal for the civil and religious rights of all men; by his liberal principles, favourable to mild government, to the unfettered exercise of the human faculties, and the progressive civilization of mankind; by his ardent love for a country, of which the well-being and greatness were, indeed, inseparable from his own glory; and by his professed reverence for that free constitution which he was universally admitted to understand better than any other man of his age, both in an exactly legal and in a comprehensively philosophical sense.

We will now take a view of the conduct of the Prince of Wales, during the last illness of this illustrious statesman, as it is related by the talented biographer of Sheridan; and certainly when his Royal Highness saw on his bed of death, the friend and companion of his early years, his preceptor in political knowledge, and, it may be added, the promoter of his pleasures and his sensual enjoyments, it would have been strange indeed

if the tear of regret had not fallen from the eye, unaccustomed as it may have been to any expression of 'the melting mood.' We are told, 'that the Prince showed all the marks of a feeling heart, and of great constancy in his friendship, more honourable to him than the high station which he adorned. Daily he called upon him; there was no affectation in his visits—the countenance full of good-natured concern, the manners expressive of lively interest, the softened voice, evinced that not all the splendour, the flattery, or pleasures of a court, had changed the brightest feature in the human character—attention to a sick and drooping friend. If his affectionate solicitude about the great statesman, then struggling under a cruel disease, and the constancy of his affection, even till the last glimmering spark of life was extinct, were the only traits recorded of him, posterity will say, this was a great Prince, a faithful friend, and possessed of a feeling, uncorrupted heart.'

With all becoming admiration for the talents of Mr. Moore, we wish that there had been less of the sickening incense of adulation in the foregoing panegyric on his Royal Highness. An isolated display of feeling is no proof of a compassionate heart, nor ought it to be taken as the criterion of a natural sense of kindness or humanity. Two of the greatest tyrants of antiquity, Nero and Dionysius, were once known to weep, and the casual observer might have called them, at that moment, kind and good. We dispute not that there might have been originally implanted in the breast of his Royal Highness an innate sense of feeling and of general philanthropy; but the libidinous excesses of his youth, his systematic destruction of feminine virtue (which must have been preceded by many a burning tear, that made as slight an impression on his cauterized heart as the drop of heaven on the wing of the cygnet), his indefatigable pursuit after personal gratification—each and all of these had so deeply contaminated his original dispositions, that the whole nature of the man became changed; and

That which once was, became
As if the child had writ it on the sand,
And the next wave erased it from the view.

In regard to the political connexions of the Prince of Wales, as influenced by the death of Mr. Fox, Mr. Moore says, 'By

the death of Mr. Fox, the chief *personal* tie that connected the heir-apparent with the party of that statesman was broken. The *political* identity of the party itself had, even before that event, been in a great degree disturbed by a coalition against which Sheridan had always most strongly protested, and to which the Prince, there is every reason to believe, was by no means friendly. Immediately after the death of Mr. Fox, his Royal Highness made known his intentions of withdrawing from all personal interference in politics; and, though still continuing his sanction to the remaining ministry, expressed himself as being no longer considered “a party man *.” During the short time that these ministers continued in office, the understanding between them and the Prince was by no means of that cordial and confidential kind which had been invariably maintained during the lifetime of Mr. Fox: on the contrary, the impression on the mind of his Royal Highness, as well as on those of his immediate friends in the ministry, Lord Moira and Mr. Sheridan, was, that a cold neglect had succeeded to the confidence with which they had hitherto been treated; and that, neither in their opinions nor feelings, were they any longer sufficiently consulted nor considered.’

The strong attachment of the Prince of Wales to the political principles of Mr. Fox may be gathered from the speech which he made at the Pavilion at Brighton, on the occasion of the health of the Princess Charlotte being drank, when he said, that ‘he had made it his first care to instil into the mind and heart of his daughter the knowledge and love of the true principles of the British constitution, and he had pointed out to her young understanding, as a model for study, the political conduct of his most revered and lamented friend, Mr. Fox, who had asserted and maintained with such transcendent force the just principles upon which the government, under this excellent constitution, ought to be administered for the true and

* This is the phrase used by the Prince himself, in a letter addressed to a noble Lord (not long after the dismissal of the Grenville ministry) for the purpose of vindicating his own character from some imputations cast upon it, in consequence of an interview which he had lately had with the King. This important exposition of the feelings of his Royal Highness, which, more than anything, throws light upon his subsequent conduct, was drawn up by Mr. Sheridan. Mr. Moore says, that he hoped to have been able to lay it before his readers, but the liberty of perusing it was all that was allowed him.

solid dignity of the crown, and the real security, freedom, and happiness of the people. He had the most heartfelt enjoyment in knowing, that, even in her present early years, his daughter had a just conception of the value of the precepts which had been implanted in her breast, and that she would fulfil all the duties which she might be called upon to discharge when his bones were laid in the grave.'

The year 1809 was distinguished by the memorable charges which were brought against the Duke of York for malpractices in his official situation as commander-in-chief; and which, from their venal and unconstitutional nature, did not tend to increase the affection of the people for particular branches of the royal family. It should here be stated, to the credit of the Prince of Wales, that very few, if any instances are on record, in the early part of his life, in which his Royal Highness employed his exalted patronage for the promotion of any of the immediate connexions of his numerous mistresses, for in reality there was one virtue, which Nature had forgotten, in his formation, to intermix with his constitution, and that virtue was gratitude; or, at least, it had been doled out to him with such a sparing hand, that its actual existence became a very questionable thing. From their infancy, the two elder brothers of the royal family had been brought up in entire ignorance of the value of money; both of them regarded it as the *means*, not as the *end*; and it would be a difficult point to decide which of the two brothers, on that particular head, was the greatest ignoramus. It was, however, this reckless indifference to pecuniary matters, in an economical point of view, which brought down a nation's indignation on their heads, and covered the younger of them with disgrace and odium. It was, indeed, alleged, by the advocates of the Duke of York, that no instance had been adduced, by any of the witnesses examined at the bar of the House of Commons, of his Royal Highness having participated, even in a remote degree, in any of the emoluments derived by his mistress from her traffic in the sale of places and commissions. This was, however, completely blinking the question, for he could not but be regarded, relatively speaking, as a considerable gainer by the concern; in fact, he might, with the greatest propriety, have been considered as the *sleeping* partner, whilst

Mrs. Clarke took upon herself the active part of the business. The resources of the Duke were at the lowest ebb. The demands of his mistress were extravagant and boundless; her establishment partook of the splendour of royalty itself; at the same time that the Duke was supporting another lady at a beautiful cottage at Fulham, whose habits, although not so extravagant nor profuse as those of Mrs. Clarke, subjected his Royal Highness to many heavy drains on his finances, which, added to his gambling speculations, kept him in a continual state of the deepest embarrassment. To supply the pecuniary necessities of the establishment of Mrs. Clarke from his own immediate resources, was found to be an impossibility; and therefore the influence of the Duke, and his exalted patronage as commander-in-chief, were called into action, as the sources from which the pressing exigencies of his mistress could be supplied. Her price for a majority was 900*l.*, a captaincy 700*l.*, a lieutenancy 400*l.*, and an ensigncy 200*l.*, to be paid to her by Colonel French, who, in 1804, was appointed to a commission for raising new levies; and Mrs. Clarke was not only to enjoy a certain patronage in the appointment of the officers, but a certain sum out of the bounty to every recruit that was raised. This influx of emolument stifled the clamours of Mrs. Clarke for any supply from the immediate resources of the Duke; and thus, although he could not be styled an actual participator in the profits, yet, he was a considerable gainer, inasmuch as, if those resources had not been made available, the supply must have been produced from his own immediate income.

Whilst, however, Mrs. Clarke was carrying on this traffic at the west end of the town, a public office was opened in the city of London, under the auspices of Mrs. Carey, the fair resident of the cottage at Fulham, where commissions in the army were offered to purchasers at reduced prices, and where the clerks openly and unequivocally stated that they were employed by the before-mentioned lady, and that, in addition to commissions in the army, they were employed to dispose of places in every department of church and state. These practices, so repugnant to the constitution, and at such direct variance with the spirit of the law, had been long suspected,

but it was difficult to come to the proof of them. The press had for a long time teemed with publications injurious to the character and principles of the Duke of York, as the commander-in-chief; and various surmises and opinions, agreeably to the different tempers of the people of England, were formed, either favourable or derogatory to the object of those publications. Some considered them as mere vehicles of scandal; others imagined them as insidious attacks upon the whole of the royal family, and a vile conspiracy against the illustrious House of Brunswick.

That the Duke of York was the dupe of an artful, intriguing, and talented woman cannot for a moment admit of a doubt; in fact, there were few whom she did not make her dupes, if her own interests could be promoted by it: but it was the circumstance of her attempt to involve the subject of these memoirs in the accomplishment of her plans, which rendered it imperative on our part to enter into this detail of one of the most important eras in the history of this country, as far as the members of the royal family were concerned.

The Prince of Wales having received an anonymous letter, stating that the writer had some very important communications to make, the trusty John M'Mahon was despatched to No. 14, Bedford-row, Russell-square, whence the note was dated. There he was introduced to a lady, who began to question him respecting any knowledge which he possessed of Mrs. Clarke; and, having denied that he had any personal knowledge of her, he was then questioned as to the knowledge which he possessed of her character. The courtier, however, saw not through the snare that was laid for him, and expressed himself in very disrespectful terms of the lady, concluding with the observation that nothing which he had heard tended to her advantage. The lady whom he was addressing, and to whom he had given such a questionable character of Mrs. Clarke, was Mrs. Clarke herself! and John M'Mahon stood before her, abashed and confounded. He begged her a thousand pardons for the portrait which he had drawn of her, but he disclaimed being the painter. 'I know it well,' said Mrs. Clarke, with all that fascination of which she was the mistress, and in which, perhaps, she excelled more than any other

woman of her peculiar condition ; ‘ I know,’ said she, ‘ who have drawn my character to you ; it is Adams and Greenwood :’ and she then proceeded to enter upon the business for which the interview was desired. It was evidently the aim of Mrs. Clarke to engender enmity between the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, but on what grounds, or on whose account, M‘Mahon refused to disclose, when he was examined on the subject at the bar of the House of Commons, of which he was a member for the rotten borough of Aldeburgh, in Suffolk ; and, at the same time (although it is enacted by the legislature that no person holding any office or employment under Government, from which is derived any profit or emolument, shall be deemed eligible for a seat in parliament), we find M‘Mahon member of the Honourable the Council of his Royal Highness as Duke of Cornwall, Deputy Warden of the Stannaries, Auditor and Secretary to the same, Keeper of the Privy and Council Seals, Keeper of the Privy Purse, &c. &c. At a subsequent period of this most extraordinary investigation, Mrs. Clarke avowed herself to be the author of the anonymous letter to the Prince of Wales ; and in consequence of the interview which took place between her and M‘Mahon, a message was sent by his Royal Highness, regretting that his departure for Brighton would prevent him interfering in the business, but that M‘Mahon should be the mediator between herself and his royal brother. It appears, however, that so far from being the mediator, he became, under the guise of friendship, the slavish instrument of extracting particular information from Mrs. Clarke, to be afterwards made use of to her injury, when a phalanx of power was arrayed against her, which would have crushed any spirit, were it a hundred times more firm and daring than her own. To show, however, the duplicity of this man, whose character and honour were deemed so unblemished as to entitle him to the confidence and friendship of the future King of England, we give the following letter, which is but one of a series which was read at the table of the House of Commons, from the same person, and which was purposely done to show M‘Mahon’s character in its proper light.

‘ Nothing, Mrs. Clarke may be assured, but indisposition, and wanting in the pleasure of having anything successful to report, could have so long prevented my calling on or sending to her.

‘ In whatever communication may have been made to Mrs. Clarke’s lawyer, I am indignant that such terms as “ either deceiving, or laughing at you ” should form a part of it, having reference to me ; for while I lament my total inability to serve Mrs. Clarke, I am ready to confess, that in the few interviews *I had the honour* to hold with her, her conduct and conversation demanded nothing but my respect and the good wishes I bear her.

‘ J. M.’

The whole of the public business was for a time suspended, in the investigation of these charges against the Duke of York, and perhaps on no occasion was more acrimony evinced by the opponents of the Duke, or a more ardent zeal displayed by all the adherents of the Court, to bring off the royal delinquent in triumph. The voice of the public was, however, against his Royal Highness, and the facts which were proved were so glaringly corrupt and immoral, that the Duke saw it no longer possible to stem the torrent which poured from all sides so rapidly against him, and therefore adopted the wiser plan of a voluntary resignation rather than that of a compulsory dismissal. On the 20th of March, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in the House of Commons, and stated, that he had to communicate to the House, that his Royal Highness the Duke of York, of his own accord, spontaneously waited on his Majesty, and resigned the high office which he had so long held, as Commander-in-chief, into his Majesty’s hands. The motives for his Royal Highness having taken that step at this particular time, appeared to him so proper, that he entertained the most sanguine hopes, they would prove satisfactory to the House. The substance of the communication was to the following effect,

‘ That the House of Commons, after a long and full investigation into the conduct of his Royal Highness, as Commander-in-chief, having passed certain resolutions, declaring their conviction of his innocence, and acquitting him of those criminal charges which had

been moved against him, he thought he might now tender a resignation of the office he held of Commander-in-chief, without appearing to shrink from those charges, or that he ever entertained a doubt of his innocence being fully proved. That the motives which induced him to approach his Majesty, who, as a kind and indulgent father and gracious Sovereign, had conferred on him this high command, in order to request he would again receive them, were that, having obtained so complete an acquittal of all corrupt motives, and of all participation or connivance at corruption, with which he had been charged, he was desirous of giving way to that public sentiment which those charges, however ill founded, had unfortunately drawn on him. That it did not become him to give up a situation in which his Majesty's confidence had placed him, without expressing a hope that, during the period of fourteen years he had had the honour to hold it, his Majesty had been convinced that he had done everything in his power to promote the interests of the service, and to evince his constant regard for the welfare and prosperity of the army.'

This communication having been made to his Majesty by his Royal Highness, his Majesty had been most graciously pleased to accept it.

Mr. Bragge Bathurst then moved the following resolution—

'That, while the House acknowledges the beneficial effects resulting from the services of his Royal Highness the Duke of York, during the time of his being Commander-in-chief, they had observed with the greatest regret that, in consequence of a connexion most immoral and unbecoming, a pernicious and corrupt influence had been used in respect to military promotions, and such as gave colour to the various reports respecting the knowledge of the Commander-in-chief of these transactions.'

To which Lord Althorpe moved an amendment—

'That the Duke of York having resigned, the House did not *now* think it necessary to proceed further on the minutes of evidence taken before the committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Duke of York, as far as relate to his Royal Highness.'

He had purposely put in the word 'now,' because *he thought the Duke of York ought not at any time hereafter to be restored to his late situation as Commander-in-chief; and if he should, the House would resume their proceedings upon the charges.*

The Chancellor of the Exchequer next moved, that the word 'now' should be left out of Lord Althorpe's amendment; when it was carried by a majority of 123.

Thus ended this important investigation—a circumstance which threw a deep gloom over the happiness of the royal family; and it is believed to have been one of the principal causes which led, in a short time, to the return of that malady with which the King had been previously afflicted, and from which he never fully recovered.

We have already traced the rise and progress of several of the chosen favourites of the Prince of Wales; and as we shall have shortly to introduce to the notice of our readers another of the vagaries of fortune, in the person of the successor of Sir John M'Mahon, we shall, at this time, briefly state the manner and place in which this new favourite was found.

His Royal Highness was one evening on a friendly visit at the house of Lord Melbourne, at Whitehall; and on his return at two o'clock in the morning, he perceived a young man lying huddled up beneath the portico of the noble lord's house, where he had crept to avoid the inclemency of the weather, it having rained very hard during the evening. His Royal Highness accosted the young man, who replied that he had come from the country, and had neither parents nor home. The Prince observed to his attendants, that the youth must not remain there to perish, and ordered him to follow the carriage to Carlton House. On their arrival he directed every necessary refreshment to be given him, and that he should be put into a comfortable bed. In the morning his Royal Highness again interrogated the boy, and finding him to tell a true and artless tale, immediately directed that he should be em-

ployed in the household, having first given orders that he should be newly clothed.

A few years more, and we shall find this houseless wanderer the companion of the Prince of Wales, and, in the year 1830, enjoying one of the most honourable offices which the sovereign can bestow upon a subject.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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